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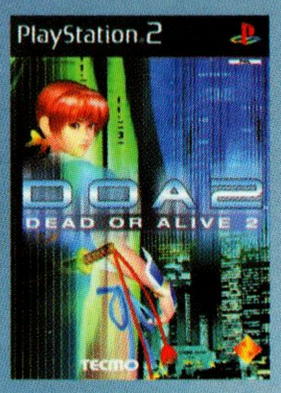
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What are friends for? Why, pummelling through walls, drop kicking down stairs and hammering through floors, of course. Dead or Alive 2 brings a whole new meaning to 'redecorating your environment. For really big jobs may we suggest the four player option. Just remember to tidy up after yourself. www.uk.scee.com/DOA2

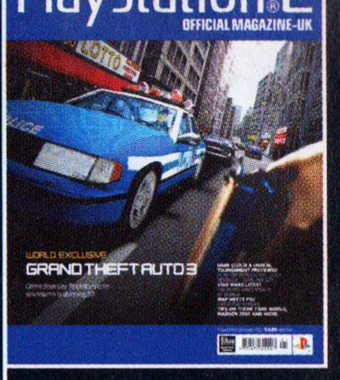
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SOAKS UP BLOOD.

LETS LIGHT IN/
LETS PEOPLE OUT.

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ON THE COVER
Law: what is it good for? Take up arms against the the LCPD in *Grand Theft Auto 3*.

ISSUE 003/JANUARY 2001

GAME REVIEWS

114 **MOTO GP**
Is Namco's arcade Superbike sim a two-wheeled *Gran Turismo*?

120 **THEME PARK WORLD**
Build the highest roller coasters and feed kids sweets until they hurl.

124 **F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000**
EA Sports' Grand Prix game claims pole position on the PS2 grid.

128 STREET FIGHTER EX3
131 DISNEY'S DINOSAUR
132 GUN GRIFFON BLAZE
134 SILPHEED: THE LOST PLANET
136 DRAGON'S LAIR I & II
139 HOLOGRAM TIME TRAVELER

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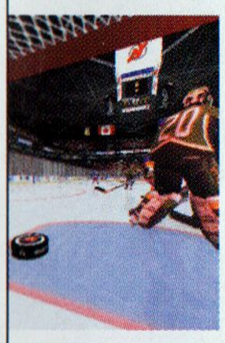
ON THE DISC

TWO GREAT PLAYABLE DEMOS





DEMO1/DYNASTY WARRIORS 2
The slash-'em-up with a cast of hundreds where you get to lead your troops by gutsy, blade-wielding example.





DEMO2/NHL 2001
Take to the ice as either Noo Joisy or Dallas in this frantic and beautifully realised ice hockey showdown.

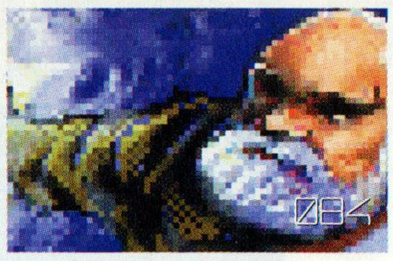




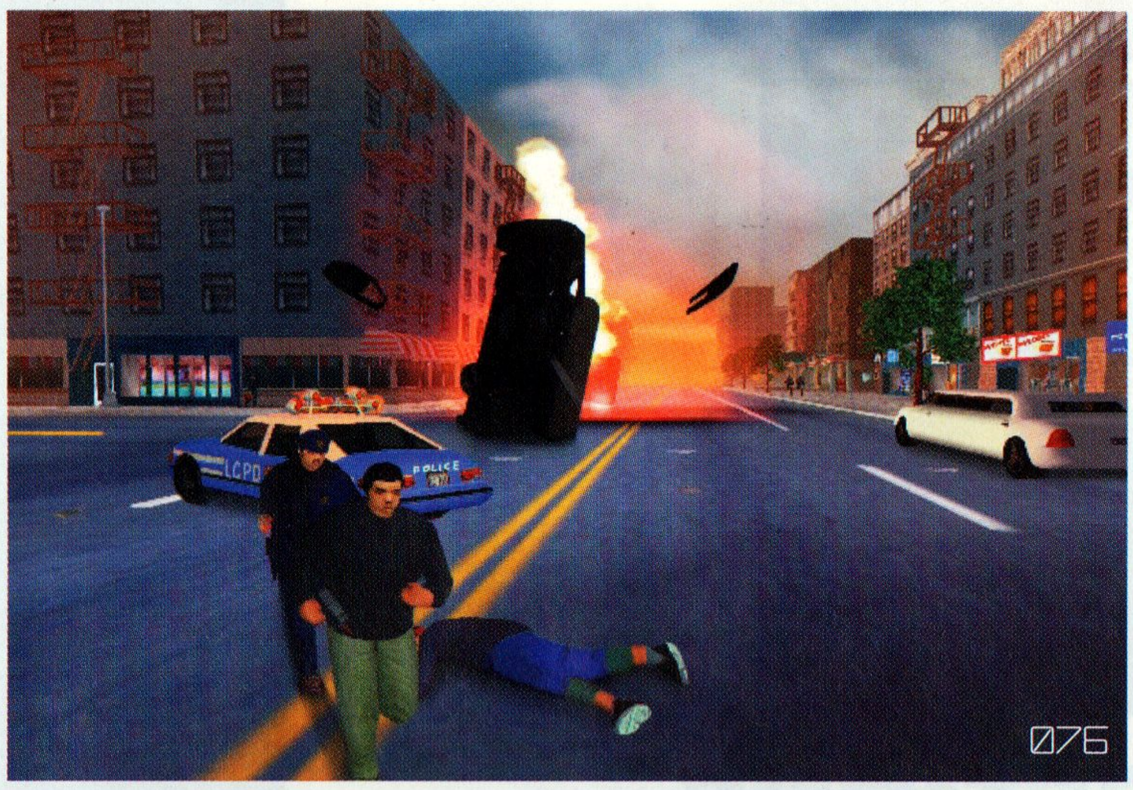


PLUS/**ROLLING DEMOS**
Kessen, Theme Park World, Street Fighter EX3, WipEout Fusion and *F1 Championship Season 2000...*

››FULL DETAILS PAGE 10













FEATURES

036 **THE PS2 INTERVIEW: PHIL HARRISON**
The man who established the PlayStation as a force in Europe and who is now returning to ensure SCEE's in-house games are truly top drawer.

070 **I'M WITH THE BAND**
The Bemani music game phenomenon gets jiggy with PS2..

072 **RACE FOR THE PRIZE**
Former PSone development doyens Psygnosis have been through a rough patch recently. Now renamed SCEE Studio Liverpool they're back on track with *Formula One 2001*.

076 **LARCENY IN NYC**
World exclusive. *OPS2* gets the word on the street about the return of DMA Design's sociopathic crim sim. Steal cars! Deal drugs! Shoot cops! All in sumptuous 3D.

084 **PLAY AS YOU GO**
How mobile WAP technology will change the face of videogames.

090 **RETURN TO THE LAND OF THE DAMNED**
Amazing first peek at *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2*.

096 **THE THIRD PLACE**
Find out what the strange PS2 ad campaign was all about and how *Twin Peaks* creator David Lynch is making it stranger still.

GAME PREVIEWS

016 **DARK CLOUD**
Welcome to the strange, beguiling world where Zelda meets *Sim City*.

022 **UNREAL TOURNAMENT**
The much-anticipated shooter locks and loads for PS2.

026 **NO ONE LIVES FOREVER**
028 **SKY ODYSSEY**
030 **KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001**
032 **LOTUS CHALLENGE**
034 **ROBOT WARLORDS**

REGULARS

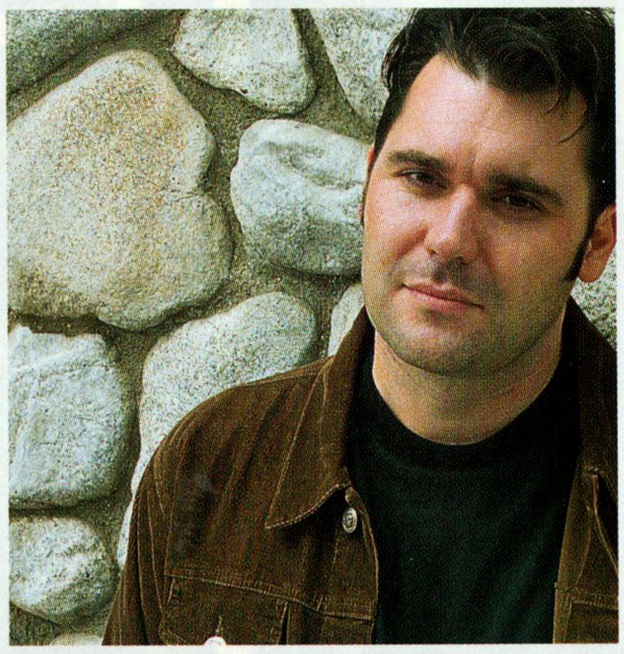
006 **Editor's Letter**
008 **Contributors**
014 **Postal**
The bit you write. Sharpen them pencils now...
042 **Next Month**
045 **Spy**
News, interviews, analysis, rumours and reports from across the planet.
140 **PSone Reviews**
Final Fantasy IX, plus the rest of the best new PSone releases.
142 **Subscribe**
Save 10% and have your copy of *OPS2 Magazine* delivered to your door.
144 **Media**
Reservoir Dogs and *The Perfect Storm* on DVD, rock trio Feeder interviewed.
150 **HardCore**
The best *TimeSplitters* maps, *Dynasty Warriors 2* strategy guide, plus cheats and tips.
156 **EndGame**
Get involved.
162 **GameOver**
Time for bed.

PS2: THE 2001 PREVIEW

THE GAMES, THE DVDS, THE HARDWARE, THE EVENTS, THE LOT.../**PAGE 101**



EDITOR'S LETTER



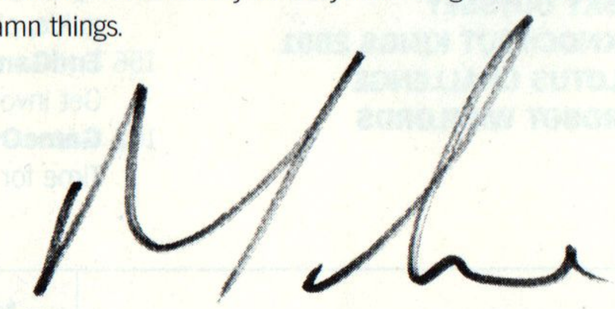
Questions and answers

Why did you buy your PlayStation 2? Was it because you ache for sophisticated adult gameplay? Perhaps you simply want your arcade thrills faster than light? Or maybe you want to play as the cute dinosaur from that Disney film. Then again, you might just want it as a DVD player and have a go on the odd game. Hell, that *TimeSplitters* looks a giggle so why not whack it on after *Blair Witch*?

Many of the letters we've received after our debut issue have touched on the hardcore/mainstream, old/young arguments. While some readers see PlayStation 2 as the magnifying glass that will bring out the gaming nuances hinted at in such PSone titles as *Metal Gear Solid*, others see it quite simply as 'a good laugh'. For all the future promises, goes the argument, this is just a games console that plays bloody good games and lets you watch movies. Yes, goes the counter-argument, but such future advances as broadband delivery and episodic gameplay will sort the men from the boys and show that games aren't just for kids. It's a console. It's the future of computer entertainment. It's a DVD player. *Donald Duck: Quack Attack. Fight Club. Resident Evil. Toy Story 2.* Hardcore. Mainstream. Yada yada yada.

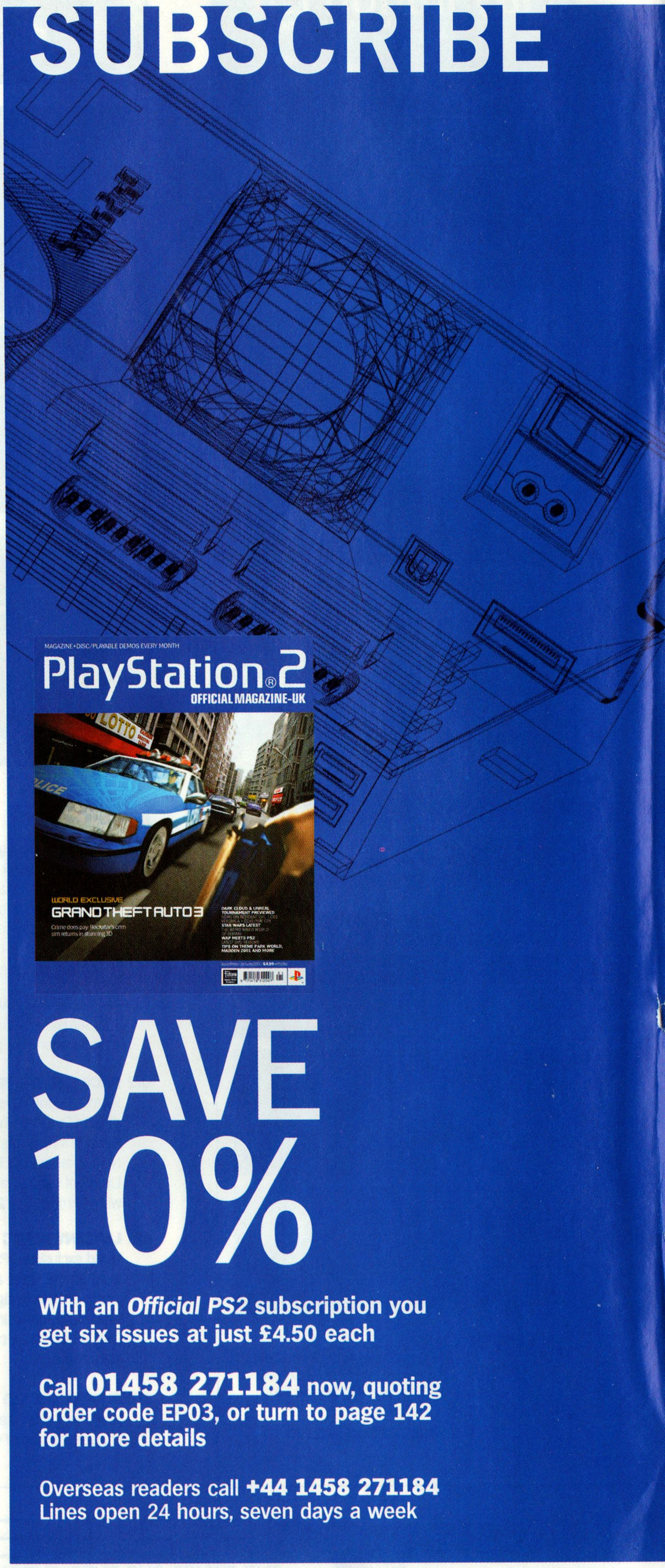
The piecemeal answer to the above is, yes, that it's all of the above. No one ever argued over what a video recorder was – it was what you watched on it that counted. The same's true of the PlayStation 2 but crucially, it's also *not* – unlike your trusty VHS, Sony's latest and greatest won't be standing still under your TV. Those who crave straight-ahead gaming thrills or just want to watch the latest movies will be happy with PlayStation 2 straight out of the box, their pleasures increased as the content gets better. Count us in with that crowd for sleepless nights and thrill-packed days but after such visceral pleasures, I don't think it's snobbish to ask for, well, more. From the game developers we interview to the boffins busy inventing new peripherals, those people behind the scenes are desperate to realise the best from PlayStation 2. They want it to evolve into something that will offer us experiences we haven't even dreamed of yet. Co-operative online gaming, tactile interfaces, real-time interactive play... Buzzphrases, yes, but *what* buzzphrases. We all liked playing *Pong* but wouldn't it have been great to *feel* the white dot when you volleyed it back?

New readers – and there's hopefully a few of you after Christmas, if that's you, welcome – will wonder what the hell I'm on about. Hopefully a few older readers will too. The fact is the PlayStation 2 is what you want it to be. Why not write to us and tell us what your vision of the future is. This and future issues show some of our ideas. It's just a shame we're usually so busy leathering each other at *TimeSplitters* to finish the damn things.



MIKE GOLDSMITH
Senior Editor

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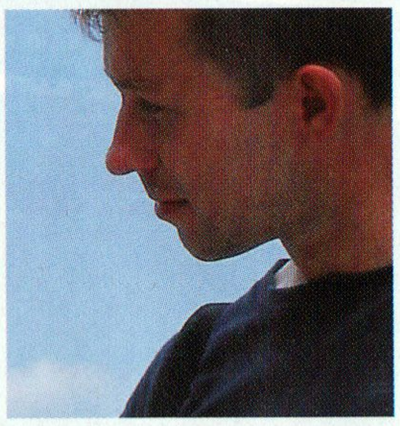
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Helping *Official PS2* leak onto the shelves this month are...

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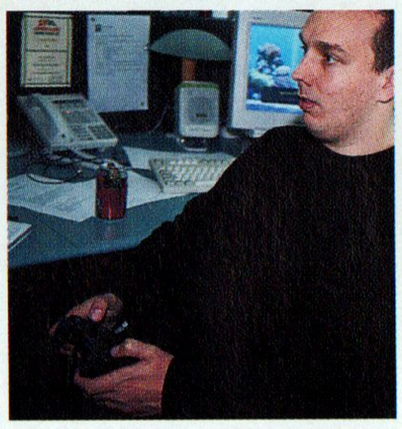


Max's '30 Days In Tokyo' column has been dominated recently by jibes at *Moto GP*. "It's because I used to go Superbiking," he explains. "The game didn't live up to my expectations." One PS2 title which does tally with Max's life experiences is *Madden NFL 2001* which he's been caning since its release. "I used to play Wide Receiver in my University team. That's the player who runs down the wing and catches the ball. An odd position given I'm short and slow." They don't really celebrate Christmas in Tokyo so Max is instead looking forward to New Year and handing his father-in-law a wad of cash in an envelope.

Game of the moment: Taito's *Greatest Striker*, which comes with a voice recognition peripheral. "You shout Jap-lish phrases such as 'shootoo!' and 'kicka!' into the mic and the players do what you tell them."

I'm holding my breath for: "KCET's new *Jikkyou Soccer* game." That's the 'proper' *ISS* to us. Good man.

STEVE MERRETT

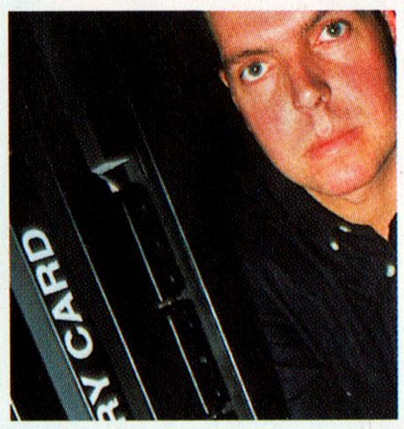


Cockney Steve doesn't live like the rest of us. He lives in the future. That's why he knows so much about 2001 and was able to compile our hugely comprehensive PlayStation 2 calendar (starting on page 101). *OPS2*'s oracle also reckons he know what else is going to happen next year. "Sega will give up on the Dreamcast and develop games like *Crazy Taxi 2* for PS2," he claims. "Also, EA Sports will release *FIFA 2002* and it will be exactly the same as *FIFA 2001*. Then again, that's a bit like saying the sun will rise in the morning." What a visionary.

Game of the moment: "Anything with lots of 'S' in. *SSX*. *ISS* and *Silent Scope*. Like me, they're all good in short bursts."

I'm holding my breath for: "KCET's new *Jikkyou Soccer* game." You too, eh. Let's hope it's good.

JAMIE SEFTON

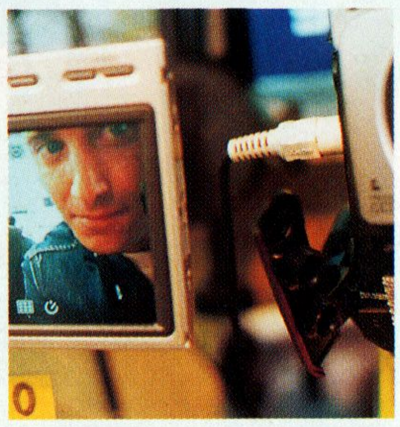


OPS2's newshound is often seen convulsing with righteous anger. The victims of his neverending wrath this month have been the Internet, EA, Capcom, anyone phoning him up to complain about the cost of a PS2 Memory Card like it's his fault, Sam for consistently tanning his arse at *ISS*, Rio Ferdinand for costing his beloved Leeds £18m and still allowing Leicester to beat them 3-1, and the entire videogame industry for turning their back on the 3D platforming genre. "It's been a relatively calm month for me," the easily-riled Seftinator reckons. "I've only had to use a certain word at full volume four times."

Game of the moment: *Unreal Tournament* for which Sefton shows worrying ex-PC geek tendencies by hooking it up with a keyboard and mouse.

I'm holding my breath for: "KCET's *Jikkyou Soccer* game." Can you see a theme here?

MARTIN BURTON



Lovely snapper Martin has found himself photographing some of the games industry's top bods for the *OPS2* Interview. "Last month I persuaded Ian Livingstone [Eidos's Executive Chairman] to sit on a child's plastic car. This month, I had Phil Harrison [SCEE Senior Vice President] pretending to be asleep. These are people in powerful positions but they obviously didn't want to come across as corporate suits." As well as taking photos for *OPS2*, Martin's work appeared prominently in *The Guardian's Weekend* supplement a couple of months back.

Game of the moment: "*Vib Ribbon* for PSone. Stylistically it's so fresh and unusual." He's so arty!

I'm holding my breath for: "*Gran Turismo 3* looks absolutely astounding. It really emphasises how far games graphics have come in five years."

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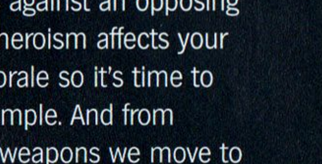
>>ON THE DISC

PLAYABLE DEMOS





This month we've got a delicious buffet of gaming splendour set up on the virtual trestle table we like to call the *OPS2* demo disc. Those of you old enough to remember Third Century, feudal Japan will instantly recognise the events around our first playable demo, *Dynasty Warriors 2* – an epic slash-'em-up that drops you in the past and pits you and your loyal troops against an opposing army. Your heroism affects your soldiers' morale so it's time to lead by example. And from sharpened weapons we move to blunt ones in the shape of hockey sticks and our second playable demo, *NHL 2001*. Fast, incredibly detailed and with all the fouls and scraps you'd expect from professional ice hockey, it's a great game and it also includes a top two-player option. If that's not enough, you can check out rolling demos of some excellent games. You'll be blown away by the sheer scale of *Kessen*'s battle sequences, energised by our thrilling taster of the upcoming *WipEout Fusion* and if you've got any energy left, why not take a wander around *Theme Park World*. There's more, of course, but don't waste any more time. Get that disc in your PS2.



Catherine Channon
Disc Editor

PS. To use this disc, insert it in your PS2. Then scroll between games, rolling demos and extras with the ↓ and ↑ keys. To choose within a section use ← and →. Press ⊗ to start up your choice. You may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.







I PLAYABLE DEMO ONE

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

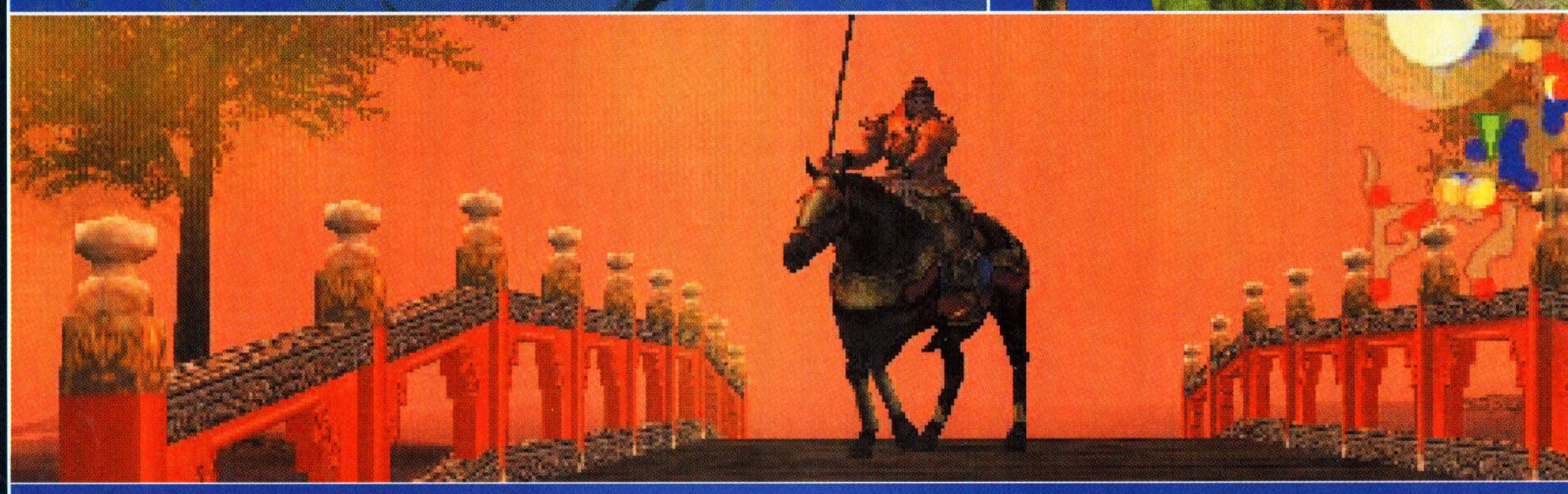
Publisher: Midas Interactive/Game type: Strategy/Slash-'em-up
Demo type: Playable/Out: Now/Players: 1

THE GAME

***Dynasty Warriors 2* is an epic slash-'em-up that lets you be a blade-wielding general in war-ravaged, Third Century China. Set during the Three Kingdoms Period (for all you history fans) *DW2* features a cast of hundreds of soldiers, archers and generals, 40 of which can battle away independent of your character on-screen at any given moment. Be a good warrior and you'll inspire your troops. Run around like a headless Peking duck and their morale will plummet. Action, strategy and sumptuously detailed graphics await those brave enough to meet the challenge.**
*A full review of *Dynasty Warriors 2* appeared in issue #02

THE DEMO

In our fully playable demo you get to play one of three generals in the allied army during the Battle of Hu Lao Gate, 191 AD. To get going, select *Dynasty Warriors 2* from the demo disc menu screen and press START when prompted to. You'll then be taken to the character-selection screen, from which you can choose to be either the spear-wielding Zhao Yun, Dian Wei with his sword and slightly worrying horse-head shield, or Sun Shang Xiang armed with her two circular blades. Your starting position on the battlefield will depend on which character you select. From here you'll enter the map screen showing arrows depicting the two armies' fronts in the upcoming conflict. Allies are blue, enemies red. From this screen you can enter sub-menus to find out the background to the battle, conditions of victory, your allies, enemies and how many soldiers make up your private escort. The final sub-menu is 'Fight'. Select this when you are ready to start playing. The demo has a time limit of four minutes, during which time you need to advance as far as you can with your troops.



THE CONTROLS

D-PAD OR LEFT ANALOGUE STICK
Warrior Movement
⊗ Jump (the longer you keep ⊗ pressed, the higher you'll jump)/Mount Horse/Dismount Horse
△ Charge Attack (more powerful than regular attack)
○ Charge/Execute Musou Special Attack
□ Normal Attack
R1 Raise bow. (R1+□) Fire bow
R2 Toggles between current area map and battle zone map
L1 Guard/Shift (Pressing L1 in conjunction with direction keys enables you to sidestep and shuffle backwards without turning your whole body)
L2 Toggles soldier health bars on/off

ADDITIONAL ATTACK INFORMATION

You can make a combination attack by pressing Normal Attack (□) up to four times in quick succession.

Charge Attack (△) can be used in conjunction with

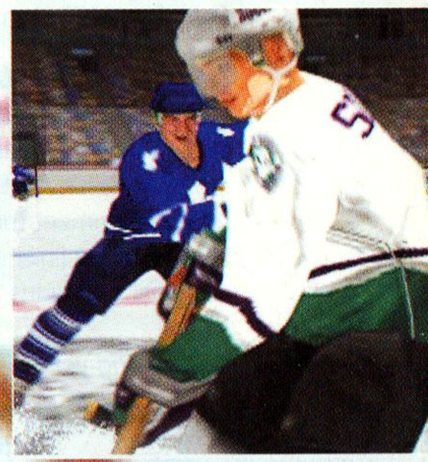
Normal Attack (□) with different results.

△ A wide sweeping attack
□△ An attack that lifts your opponent
□□△ An attack that stuns your opponent
□□□△ An attack that knocks your opponents flying

By combining Jump (⊗) with Normal Attack (□) you perform a Jump Attack that is useful against enemies on horseback.

The Musou Attack (○) is an explosive attack that you can perform when the Special Gauge (shaded pink) at the bottom of the screen, is full. There are two ways to do this. Fighting will fill the gauge but you can concentrate on filling it quickly by keeping ○ pressed. You will not be able to fight while you are charging the Special Gauge.





I PLAYABLE DEMO TWO

NHL 2001

Publisher: EA Sports/Game type: Ice hockey sim
Demo type: Playable/Out: Now/Players: 1-2

THE GAME

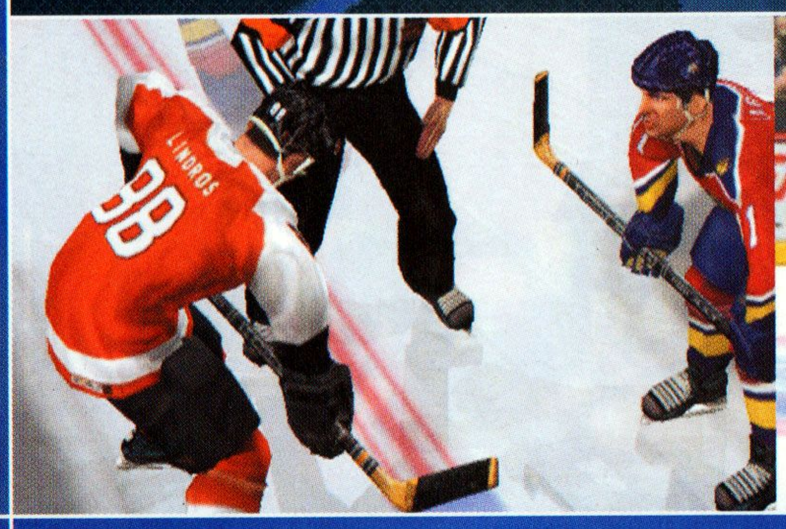
Ice hockey can be a dirty game with rucks, punch-ups and the occasional stick in the face (and sometimes even some ice hockey) but one thing is certain – it's never looked as good or played as well as it does in EA Sports' *NHL 2001*. No detail has been left out of the game. From arcade playability to simulation, fluid TV show linking scenes to *Matrix*-style spinning camera replays, graceful puck control to downright evil fouls and fist fights, you'll be hard pressed to deny EA is at the top of its game with *NHL 2001*.
*A full review of *NHL 2001* appeared in issue #02

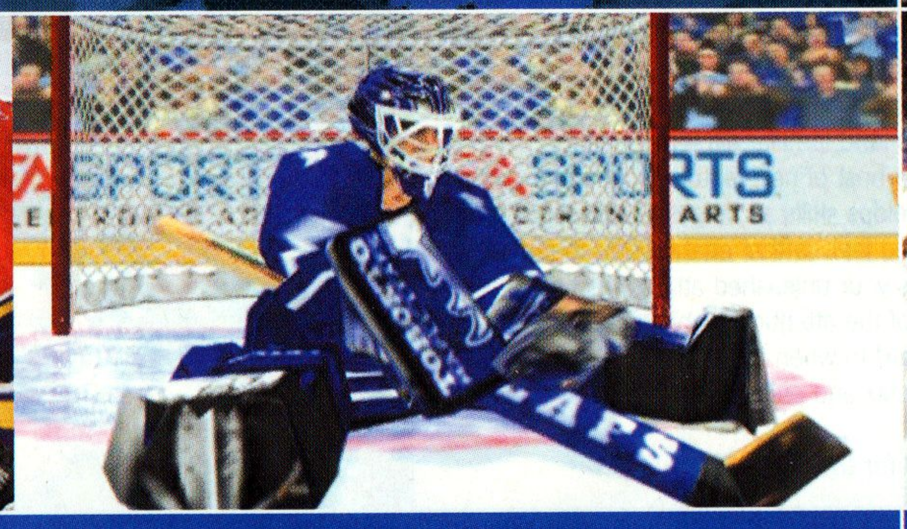
THE DEMO

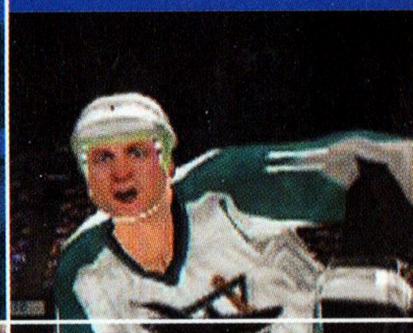
On this month's disc we are giving you the chance to play against either the computer or one of your mates in a full game between the Dallas Stars (playing away) and the New Jersey Devils (at home in their East Rutherford Stadium). You want to get to the game? From the demo disc menu screen select *NHL 2001*. Once you're past the title screen you'll be prompted to choose a one-player or two-player game. You can play as either team, but if you select neither the game will run its length in demo mode with the computer playing both teams. Either way, once you've chosen your team the game will load and you'll be treated to an excellent intro sequence as the teams enter the rink and warm up for the face-off. Once that's through, the game will begin. If you or your opposing team commit repeated fouls, two players may face up to one another for a fight. When this occurs, press ⊗ repeatedly to give as good as you get. If you don't fight back, your time in the sin bin will be less, but it isn't nearly as satisfying.
You can pause the game at any time, at which point you'll be presented with a menu offering several options. You can change the sound and screen settings, check out both teams' match statistics, enter the game as a second player, change the camera angle, or replay a favourite moment in the current game. The Replay function is well worth checking out. On-screen instructions will lead you through its specific controls. The duration of the demo should enable you to get through at least two quarters of a full game at about three minutes per quarter. With minimal stoppages you may even get to start a third quarter. This leeway time will be eaten up, though, if the match clock is stopped frequently because of fouls and scuffles. The demo disc will then reset itself, but this doesn't stop you from booting up *NHL* again and again. And you will.

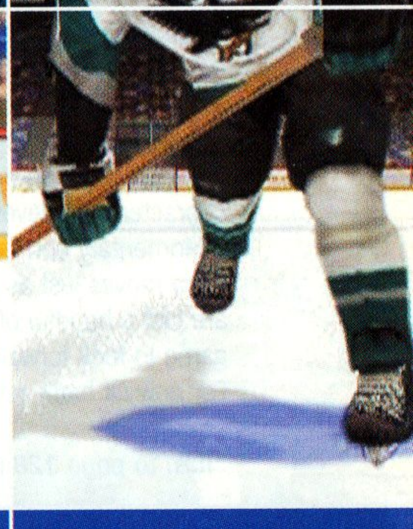
THE CONTROLS

D-PAD OR LEFT ANALOGUE STICK
Player Movement
⊗ Pass/Change Player
△ Deke (Decoy Move)/Big hit
○ Speed Burst/Body Check
□ Shoot/Poke Check











»ON THE DISC

ROLLING DEMOS

Talk to us!

»Comments and queries about this cover disc should go to me, Cat, at PS2@futurenet.co.uk. But sorry, I can't answer your questions over the phone.

»If you have further problems with your disc pop the troublesome thing in an envelope and send it to the following address. We'll test it and, if faulty, send you a new CD. We're at *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Disc Returns, Customer Services, Future Publishing, Carey Court, Bancombe Road Industrial Estate, Somerton, Somerset TA11 6TB

**Remember, though, this disc will only work on a PS2!*

ROLLING DEMO ONE

WIPEOUT FUSION

Publisher: SCEE/Game type: Future racer/Demo type: Rolling/Out: May 2001/Players:1-2

A LITTLE HISTORY. When the original *WipEout* hit PSone back in 1995 it was a console-defining title, showcasing the power of the new machine and giving the racing genre a well-timed kick in the pants. The series has been incredibly popular ever since. Resisting the temptation to simply tart up a 32-bit classic for the 128-bit generation, the developers have started from scratch. With stunning new environment themed tracks, interactive scenery that reveals secret routes, and overhauled craft sensitivity, the finished game promises to be a milestone for PS2 as well. Our rolling demo lets you see what all the fuss is about as a spectator.

**We'll bring you the review when the game is released next year. See issue 01 for more*





ROLLING DEMO THREE



KESSEN

Publisher: EA/Game Type: Combat Strategy/
Demo type: Rolling/Out: Now/Players:1

WATCHING THE BATTLE sequences in *Kessen*, it's hard not to get a major case of goosebumps. They really are that impressive. Koei's strategy game, set in 16th-century Japan, one minute fills the screen with hundreds of perfectly rendered soldiers charging on foot and horseback, and the next takes you into the climactic moment of duel between two opposing warlords. Plan campaigns and issue orders from your lofty position above the battlefield, then watch as your army tests your strategy in beautifully rendered, real-time 3D. Quite stunning. But don't take our word for it. Check out this rolling demo and try not to be impressed.

**Check out the next issue of* OPS2 *for a full review*

ROLLING DEMO TWO





STREET FIGHTER EX3

Publisher: Capcom Eurosoft/Game Type: Beat-'Em-Up
Demo Type: Rolling/Out: January 2001/Players:1-3

***SFEX3* BARELY NEEDS** any introduction at all. The over-the-top, fireball-flinging excesses of the *Street Fighter* series have been around for 13 years now. The latest game from the EX (ie 3D) branch of the family tree has the distilled gameplay brilliance (and familiar fighters) of all its predecessors and a host of new features. Tag battles, a new character who develops skills as he gains experience, and a Momentary combo feature that enables you to perform extra moves just as your unleashed attack hits its target are just a handful of the attention grabbing additions to the game to look forward to when it launches in the new year. For now sit back, relax and enjoy the mayhem.

**Turn to page 128 for the full review*









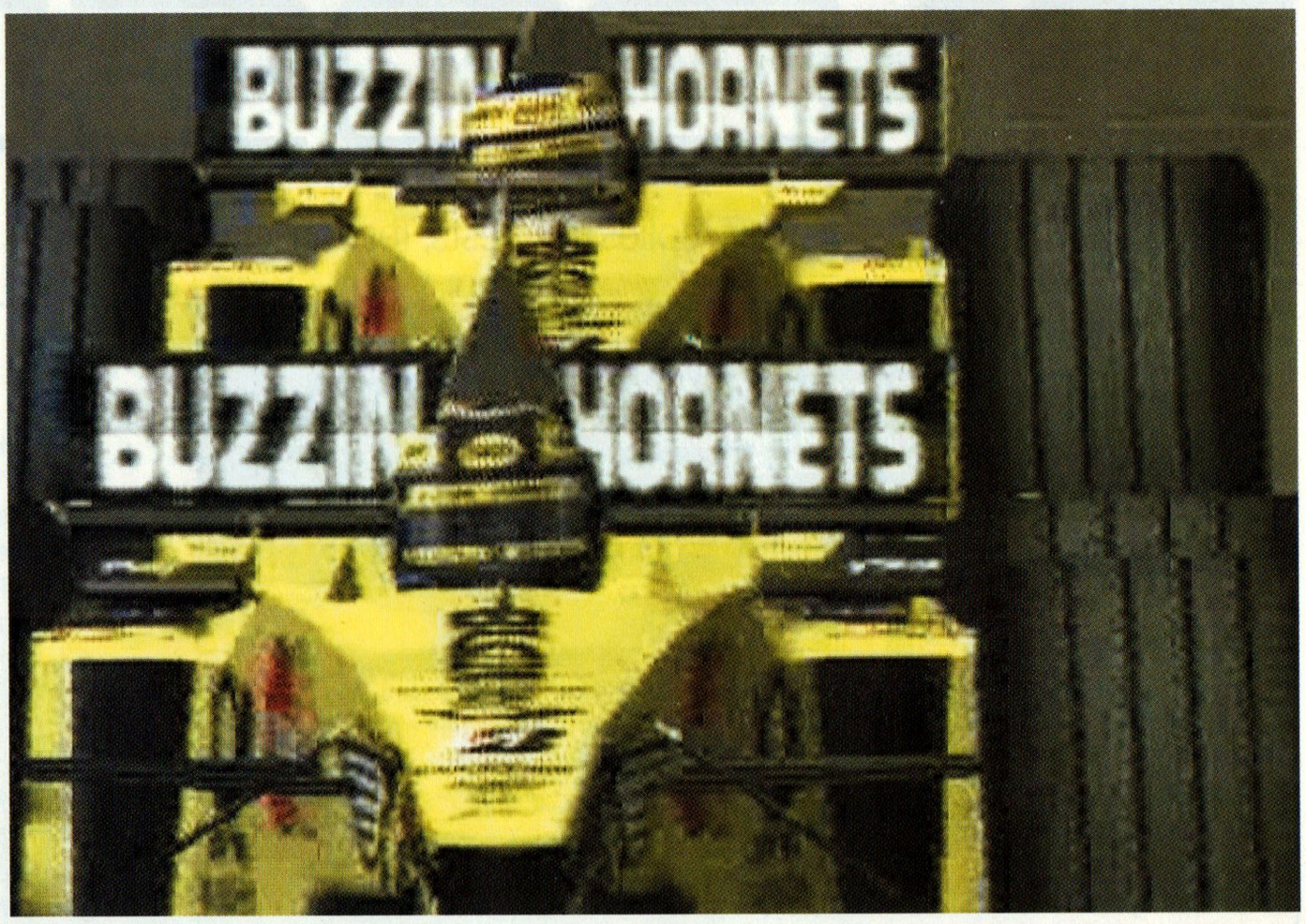
ROLLING DEMO FOUR

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000

Publisher: EA Sports/Game type: F1 sim/Demo type: Rolling
Out: Now/Players: 1-4 (22 in Time Trial mode)

IF YOU KNOW your persistent skidmarks from your height diffusers, chances are you'll be looking forward to *F1 Championship Season 2000* already. And those of you who don't know a spark plug from a flange should still prepare for the most thrilling, feature-packed F1 simulator ever. The full game will cater to hardcore racers and novices alike. Is total realism your bag? You can tweak every nut and bolt on your car and progress through the F1 season from start to finish. If arcade thrills are more for you then turn the weather off and turn the speed limiter and automatic breaking on and you can get racing without delay. Take on the computer opponents with their unique AI or race against your friends.

*For the full run-down of this racing sim, turn to page 124



ROLLING DEMO FIVE

THEME PARK WORLD

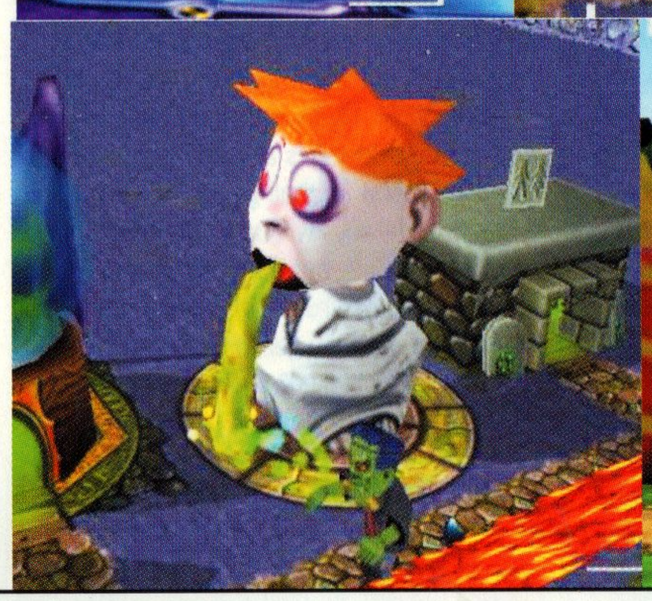
Publisher: EA/Game type: God sim/Demo type: Rolling/Out: Now/Players: 1

THEME PARK WORLD is the kind of game that modestly starts up and then sucks whole days from you without a second thought. Business sims can sometimes be a drag. But make the business a theme park, stuff it with attractions big on the fun factor, a fantastic roller coaster designer and a great first-person mode that lets you try all your creations out, and it's a different matter entirely. Keep your punters happy and your park in the black and you'll win gold tickets to open new parks with unique rides and themes. Sounds good. It is. Check out the full review on page 120 and get an eyeful of the game in motion with our rolling demo.

*Want to know more about this game? Turn to page 120











Still to come

››ON NEXT MONTH'S DISC

GREAT PLAYABLE DEMOS

01. MOTO GP
Reviewed this issue, Namco's superbike thriller is one of the PlayStation 2's best racers to date. We've got an exclusive playable track lined up, with a massive *Moto GP* competition to back it up.

02. FANTAVISION
Destined to be a cult hit within the gaming cognoscente, *Fantavision* is half puzzler, half arcade thriller, and all looker. Have a play around with one of the PlayStation 2's coolest launch titles.

03. RAYMAN REVOLUTION
He's 'armless, he hasn't got a leg to stand on, he's lost his head… Whatever the gag, *Rayman* is one of the best platformers out there and the PS2 version is no different. Time to find out why.

PLUS
Brand-new footage of the PlayStation 2's future hits, including next month's cover star – the mighty *Unreal Tournament*!

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the contents of our demo disc are subject to change



postal

Your replies, requests, responses and rants…

Winner of the StarLetter each issue gets an exclusive *Official PS2 Magazine* T-shirt. Sadly, anyone else printed gets nowt – except, of course, the rare honour that is seeing their name in print in this fine tome. Although we are working on mugs. And maybe pens. Send those lovely letters to: Postal, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email PS2@futurenet.co.uk. Get you writing now!



THE STARLETTER

It's said that PlayStation 2 is difficult to develop for. Hideo Kojima says, "The hardware doesn't do any favours for you." But even the results so far suggest that little bit of extra effort, creativity and experimentation required could reap enormous rewards.

Isn't that a bit like life? Play safe, stay within your established parameters and you'll probably be okay but you'll never be a real winner. Take chances, be original, and perhaps you'll change the world, in however small a way. From tiny acorns…

As PlayStation 2 launches in the UK, we've also been blessed with a new *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*. My hopes for both it and the machine are very high, based on previous experience. But how far does the parallel between machine and magazine go? Will the new PlayStation 2 publication be difficult to develop for? Will there be the temptation to play safe, to stick to the successful formulae applied to previous Future Publishing titles? Or are you going to take a few risks, try a few experiments and take games magazines into the kind of new future that PlayStation 2 offers for home entertainment?

Well done on the fresh presentation and layout of *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*'s first issue. So far so good. But I'm sitting here excitedly, expecting more and looking forward to what you're going to come up with. Be different. Don't be the magazine equivalent of 'latest instalments in one well-known franchise or another'. Make us sit up. And you'll be our friend for ever.

Kevin Patton, Norwich

Respect, sir. While we were quietly chuffed with our first issue, it'll be a long time before we arrive at where we want to be, not that we're exactly sure just where that is yet – as you say, a bit like PlayStation 2. Yes, we'll bring you stylishly designed and nicely written news, previews, reviews and features on the latest games but, hell, anyone can do that. If we're to truly compliment the PlayStation 2, we need to do what other people can't. As Browning once said, "A man's reach must exceed his grasp or what's a heaven for?" A bit poncey like, but you get the drift.

DISC ERROR

Yippee, a demo disc on *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*. How cool is that? Hold on, PlayStation 2 isn't out in the UK until 24 November. Okay, not too bad. There are some videos of a few games to keep me going. Maybe make a few prime choices, so I'll be ready to buy on the day I pick up my PS2? (Loads blue DVD into DVD player.) Uh, why does it keep saying insert disc? Oh frikkin' hell, it's not really a DVD disc. I'm gonna have to wait for another two weeks at least, just to view the frikkin disc. What's the point of releasing a demo disc for PS2 at least two weeks before its release, in a format that only a PS2 can read?

Think about it. You're trying to increase readership by releasing a disc showing off PS2, but no one can watch the thing until they own a PS2. It would have made more sense to make the disc either PSone-compatible or DVD-film compatible.

Martyn Tueton, Via email

Deep thinking, Mr T, but we no agree for a few reasons. (i) We are the only mag that runs playable PS2 demos. Thus we make a playable PS2 demo disc. (ii) You have a DVD player but most prospective PS2 owners don't – they're (duh) waiting for their PlayStation 2. So no real gain there. (iii) Add the two together and it means our PS2-buying readers will have a demo disc to play and watch when they get their new PS2 instead of just a disc to watch. Oh, and a PSone-compatible disc can't store playable PS2 demos and would feature inferior-quality video footage. Hey Martyn, you no want play the frikkin' nice games?

FAMILIARITY OVER FAVOURITISM

I hope you are prepared to accept some constructive criticism of what was generally an excellent first issue. Judging from opinions in the gaming press, *SSX* and *TimeSplitters* are the two outstanding launch titles available on PlayStation 2, as your reviews reflected with their StarPlayer awards. The total number of pages given over to these two games was eight, compared to the 10 pages devoted to *Tekken Tag Tournament*. This would be understandable if *Tekken Tag* was an outstanding game but the overwhelming opinion (including that of your reviewer) is that it is merely a tarted up *Tekken 3*.

As a cutting-edge new console, PS2 needs excellent original titles just like *TimeSplitters* and *SSX*, not a succession of cosmetically enhanced sequels of PSone games. Would it be too cynical to suggest that as the *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine* you were obliged to devote a disproportionate amount of space to a Sony game, which in the long run can only harm the chances of its new console attracting the acclaim it clearly merits?

Colin Campbell, via email

Space is apportioned to games on a fair few criteria – their importance, their heritage and, most importantly, whether there's a lot to actually say about them. Yes, Tekken Tag *is a tarted up* Tekken 3 *but there's a whole lot more to write about a tarted up* Tekken 3 *than there is* SSX. *Example? Oasis, say, release a crap album. Do you reduce the size of the review because it's crap or do you write thoroughly on just why it's crap? Oh, and Sony has no say in the content of this magazine. We review its games like anyone else's – if not, then why did* Tekken *score the same as* Silent Scope*?*

HARD DISK WORRIES

My only fear about PlayStation 2 is concerning the forthcoming Hard Disk Drive. How can gamers be sure that this won't tempt some developers to send out 'unfinished' games as they did with the PC? I hope that you can somehow convince me that this won't be the case.

Kenneth, Denmark

We understand your concern. The thought of patches, bugs and Gates knows what else is a nightmare waiting to happen. SCEE's Producer of Special Projects, Richard Milner, replies: "SCEE only allows games to be published once they have been carefully checked. All licensed PS2 publishers have their own in-house Quality Assurance teams, and these are backed up by a large and experienced QA department that SCEE maintains in Liverpool. Sony QA carries out a detailed series of checks for technical compatibility, localisation, standards and functionality bugs on every title released in Europe. Even demo discs are carefully checked, though minor bugs are often tolerated in demo code. It would not be in Sony's interests to allow unfinished software to be released, and Sony's QA has the final say on all software for PS2. You can rest assured that any game you buy will be as bug-free as is humanly possible." Game on.

NOT JUST FOR THE KIDS

The letters in the first edition of *OPS2* hinted at a bright future, but I fear the layman does not realise videogames are capable of emotive content. When the pre-order system made national news headlines, the emphasis was on SCEE putting pressure on parents to buy their kids this new, expensive toy. When I explain that the main attraction behind games like *Silent Hill* and *Final Fantasy* is their ability to engage the player on an emotional level – at least, that's why I like them – the idea is met with derision.

How long will this perception of videogames last? Do you suppose that there will always be a view that videogames are mindless children's entertainment? Let's hope that my favourite pastime is one day granted the same acceptance as films and literature.

Robin Whitbread, Taunton

Let's not forget that PlayStation 2 is what you make it – and that includes you, me and the lucky ankle-biters who are playing PS2 and will grow up to appreciate its deeper delights. Some people want sophisticated digital engagement, some people want no-brainer arcade action, some people want RC Revenge Pro. *It's a free world, baby, and while we don't want to sound too liberal here, as Eddie Van Halen once said, "Not left wing, not right wing, but the whole chicken." You know what we mean.*

FUNKY CHICKEN FOOTBALL

I thought I'd get your opinion on a few things. Firstly the impending *ISS* vs *FIFA 2001* battle. My friends and I have always believed that *ISS* is a real football sim and *FIFA* is just a football game. FIFA does and probably always will have the names, clubs and kits, but that's where the realism stops. True, *FIFA* is great graphically but who did they get to motion capture running? A chicken? Look at how their arms move – it's as if you're watching a match from the '20s where people didn't run but speed-walked down the pitch.

They still haven't sorted out *FIFA*'s annoying shooting weak spot – it's just too easy to score. In *ISS* however, scoring is an art form and gives you a real buzz when you do hit the back of the net. Even one-on-one situations in *ISS* aren't guaranteed.

ISS is about skill, which makes it a football sim. *FIFA* is just about how many goals you can score, which makes it a game. Lastly, I wondered if there was any information on *Smackdown 3* for the PS2?
Avern Rose, via email

And just when we were convinced you were Steve 'Bloke Who Reviews The Footie Games' Merrett's long-lost twin, you spoil it with the Smackdown *query. No details on the PS2 version as yet, except* Smackdown *publisher THQ has hooked up with a company called Digimask that will enable gamers to scan their own faces into the game. Yes, you too can take on The Rock and Mr Ass. Steve, this is you, isn't it?*

ONLINE EPISODES

I was just reading your article about *Tomb Raider* on PS2 in issue one's Spy section, and was quite annoyed when I heard about the episodic gaming plans. I already have the Internet and wasn't planning on getting the PS2 add-on, so are the extra episodes going to be available to buy in the shops like mission packs, or are they only available as downloads? If you don't get the extra episodes could you miss some of the main parts of the game? Will it cost money to download the episodes, and how much will the modem add-on cost? Personally I think that episodic gaming is a bad idea and I can't see any advantages over buying a full game from the shops.
Dan McCormick, via email

Core Design's Adrian Smith has said that the extra 'episodes' will only be an embellishment to the main game but obviously, Lara lovers will want the lot. Expect additional episodes to, yes, appear online, but also on covermount demo discs and absolutely anywhere else that people will buy them. Until we all live in a shiny cyberopolis where shops are a thing of a crumbly past, that will include shops. We like shops.

COVERING UP?

My question lies with the PlayStation 2 brochure, which, as a pre-order customer, I received in the post a day before I purchased your mag. Toward the back of the brochure I noticed that the PS2 mag is displayed, with Bryan Fury featured on the cover and the wording 'Welcome To Fight Club'. Although my feeling was one of joy – having had my first glimpse of the new *OPS2* – I was left feeling puzzled when I purchased the actual magazine from my local Asda and spied the different wording of '*Tekken Tag Tournament*' on the cover. Why the different wording?
Gavin Wade, Bath

Ah, you spotted it. Our sneaky appearance came courtesy of the booklet's design bods, Subliminal. Myself (Mike – hello) and Sam wrote the copy and this was a blackmail-bought plug after we held Subliminal to ransom on a couple of screenshots. Deadlines meant that the cover in question was an early version that, thanks to Boss Crayon Trev, went through a zillion changes. Believe us, you didn't want to see the Panda version…

WANT CHIPS WITH THAT?

First, let me congratulate you on producing an impressive first issue. Previews are great, reviews even better, and there were a number of interesting concepts about the future of PlayStation 2.

However, there is a strong point I wish to make about the rather controversial chipping/modification of PlayStation. I believe that the gaming industry is partly to blame for people's desire to get PlayStations chipped. The first point is the price of games – put simply, not everyone can afford to spend £45 on a single game. Secondly, our Japanese counterparts have the advantage of having the NTSC 60Hz system, whereby the games are significantly faster plus they have no black borders like games on our PAL system. Lastly, Japanese or American games are released much earlier than over here.

I realise the prices of PSone games have been reduced to around the £30 mark, and not before time. Why does, say, a DVD (the format is an analogous industry to the gaming industry) only cost £15-20, when producing a movie is more expensive than producing a game? Shouldn't games be priced around this bracket too? I understand the reservations of chipping, such as invalidation of warranty, but I had my PlayStation chipped and haven't had a single problem with it. I play mainly imported games, not pirated discs. If it is legal to chip stand-alone DVD players to play any DVD in the world, why is it not legal for consoles to be region-free?

In conclusion, we pay for games that seem over-priced, which are slower and not in full screen, and which are released months later. All that doesn't add up in my book. I don't want the future of games to be jeopardised, but as long as these things exist, the gaming industry should realise why people want their machines chipped.
Anonymous Web Designer,
Anonymous Web Land

To date, no one has successfully chipped PlayStation 2 but despite Sony's improved MagicGate encryption, it's fair to say that people will continue to try to crack it. Unfortunately, the reason behind this is not because of dedicated gamers like yourself who are desperate for 'proper' NTSC versions and the chance to play Japanese games. It's because they want to shift zillions of dodgy pirate discs that invariably don't work when you get them home. Production, sale and purchase of these discs are all illegal, with fines and even prison sentences waiting for those who ignore this warning. And remember, some officially made games can detect if your PSone is chipped, and won't work. OPS2 Magazine *is against piracy – full stop.*

As for your other points. Thankfully, the PS2's new 60Hz option means NTSC-to-PAL slowdown will eventually be a thing of the past. Also, staggered game releases are inevitable, but work both ways– PSone's Spyro *hits Europe first despite its US origins, while American and Japanese gamers have again had to wait for the UK-developed* Tomb Raider *and* Driver *games. Things are changing mind – Konami Europe has said that it hopes to release PS2 mech-battler* ZOE *as close to its Japanese release date as possible. As for the price, there are plenty of contributing factors (movies have already made their money at the cinema, movies have a larger collective audience, games have a whole lot more lasting appeal) but, hell, you've got a point. Would any publishers care to defend the £25 difference between a copy of* X-Squad *and a copy of* Gladiator*? The floor is yours.*

KEEP MEMORIES IN THE PAST

During my misspent youth I spent a lot of time in arcades and played many games, including *Space Ace*, *Dragon's Lair* and *Dragon's Lair 2: Time Warp*, so I was very excited to read that a company called Digital Leisure was bringing them out on PS2 in America. Will these games make it over to England? I also heard that a holographic game called *Time Traveller* is being released in the US. Is this true?
Jamie Camp, email

Like you, OPS2 *oldtimers remember chucking too many quids into* Dragon's Lair, *only for their hasty button stabs to plunge them into a fiery abyss – yes, we were mighty crap at them. The good news? Don Bluth's animated flowcharts are here and reviewed in this issue. The bad news? They're still arse. The worse news? Sequels are on their way. Nurse, the screams…* □

To be eligible for the StarLetter prize, please include your full name and address when writing by post or email. *OPS2* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and style. Email us as PS2@futurenet.co.uk.

POSTAL: EXTRA

Byte-sized chunks from the digital postbag

Dominic Sherington calmly demands of us: "WHAT THE HELL IS THIS BROADBAND THING?" We can but reply: "IT'S THE FUTURE OF HOME ENTERTAINMENT, DOM MATE!"… A tad quieter, **Tom Briers** reveals, "I had an idea for a game. It's not funny or anything but it's really cool!" Bring it on. "Well, it would be a game without instructions so the user had no idea what to do. What do you think?" We think you are either certifiable or some kind of deity… "I could use a joypad before I could even walk," boasts Mr **Neil Osbourne**. Well done, Sir. Now, what about one of them Biro things… "Hey, ain't the box a nice colour?" comments **Danny O'Neill**. "And that violet light…" 'Tis true. "…and the little silver bits in the joypad…" I think we're losing him. "Oh, then there's the start-up screen and…" Nurse! Oh, nurse… "Where can I get myself a copy of that 'slightly funny looking dummy edition' of your magazine (mentioned on page 175 of issue 01)?", asks one **Edwin Eekelaers**. "When I like something I tend to collect as much of it as possible." Now imagine if Edwin collected water, readers… Finally, Mr **Spiral Kinetic** – he born of very cruel parents – asks, "When will the price of the PS2 go down? Can you play your cover-mounted demo disc on a PSone? When will *Metal Gear Solid 2* come out?" Our survey said: (a) Not for a looong time; (b) Nope; and (c) It'll come out when it bloody well likes – we reckon the end of the year. And out…

PREVIEW CONTENTS

22 Unreal Tournament
The first competition for *TimeSplitters* is nearly upon us in all its gory splendour.

26 No One Lives Forever
It's a first-person shooter. It stars a woman. It's not Lara. It's Cate Archer…

28 Sky Odyssey
SCEE's new arcade flight sim brings the delights of aviation to the PS2.

30 Knockout Kings 2001
Guaranteed to give you brain damage by the time you're 30. EA's title struts into the ring.

32 Lotus Challenge
Elise, Elan, Esprit, the 340R – you can drive them all in Virgin's new Lotus racer.

34 Robot Warlords
An early look at this mech strategy-fighter, where destroying Tokyo is mandatory.

DARK CLOUD

WORDS: MARK WALBANK

It's weird, it's wonderful and it's the first RPG to feature whole villages hidden inside nuts. Some explanation is clearly required...

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: SCEI
Players: 1
Release: May 2001

LOSING THE PLOT

***Dark Cloud* might possibly be the strangest game you ever play, so here is the plot as it appears in the opening CG movie.**



1. A dancing ritual unleashes the demon who threatens to destroy everything in his path with his halitosis.





2. The villagers bring out as many combustibles as possible into an open area to celebrate their harvest festival.

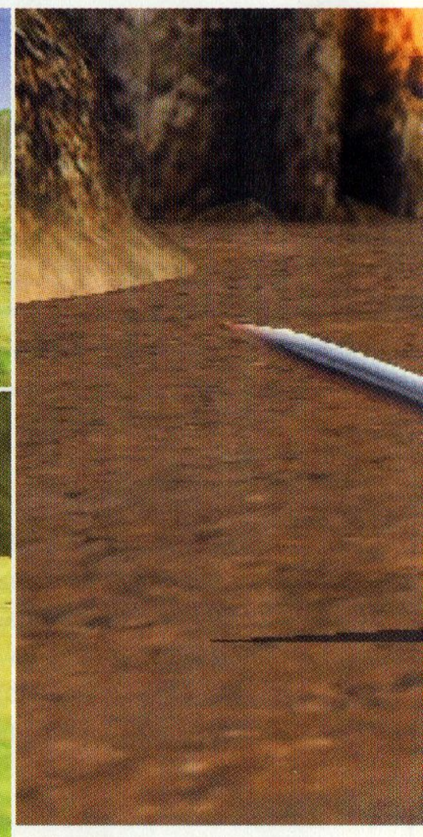




Maps can be found within chests to help you navigate the cave systems.



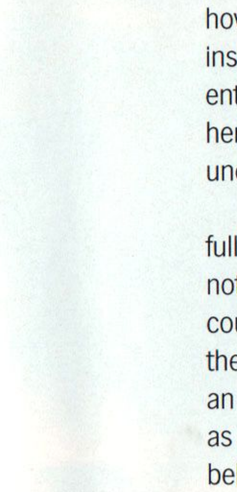
At key points in the game Toran is offered advice and gifts from the friendly magician.



What John Hurt found inside an unidentifiable pod in sci-fi chiller *Alien* was a shock to the system of even the most hardened viewer. But that was nothing compared to the inscrutible weirdness you'll find inside *Dark Cloud*. Imagine entering a gloomy cave and cracking open a large, hovering, nut-shaped object, only to find a small town hidden inside. It's an experience few would want to undergo, nut enthusiast or not. Yet this is the strange task given to Toran, the hero in SCEI's compelling new RPG which is currently undergoing translation for a UK release.

If you haven't guessed already, the game is set in a universe full of wonder, wizardry and diabolical demons who will stop at nothing to confound you with their surreal behaviour. Two countries stand opposed – one is inclined to believe in magic, the other is of a militaristic bent. The military nation discovers an ancient demon – stay with us on this – which they release as a weapon of destruction against their neighbours that leave behind dark, holocaust-like clouds of the title. A wizard from the magical nation discovers the plot and manages to protect his people by placing them inside magical capsules. There they must stay until a suitable hero can be found to release them from their incarceration.

The bizarre plot may serve to estrange many who prefer their dungeon adventures to be along more 'traditional' lines, but it also proves to be one of *Dark Cloud*'s strongest characteristics. Rather than just entering dungeons to slay a few creatures and gain monetary rewards, the player is motivated by a much stronger urge – and it's one which is more like *Sim City* than *Gauntlet*. Encased within each capsule is an element of a village that must be collected and later reconstructed on the barren landscape left by the demon's devastating powers. It certainly adds a novel twist to the RPG genre. One capsule may contain a garden fence, another



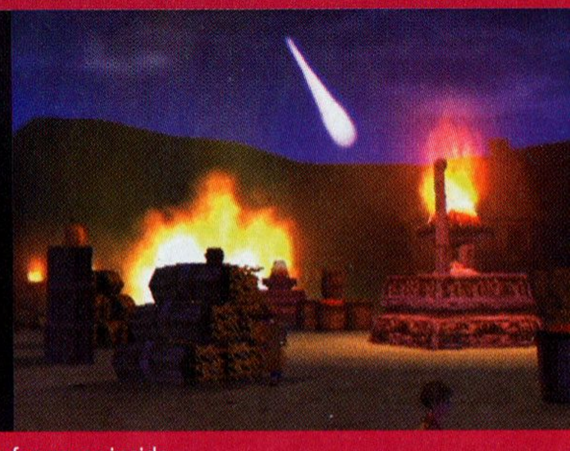


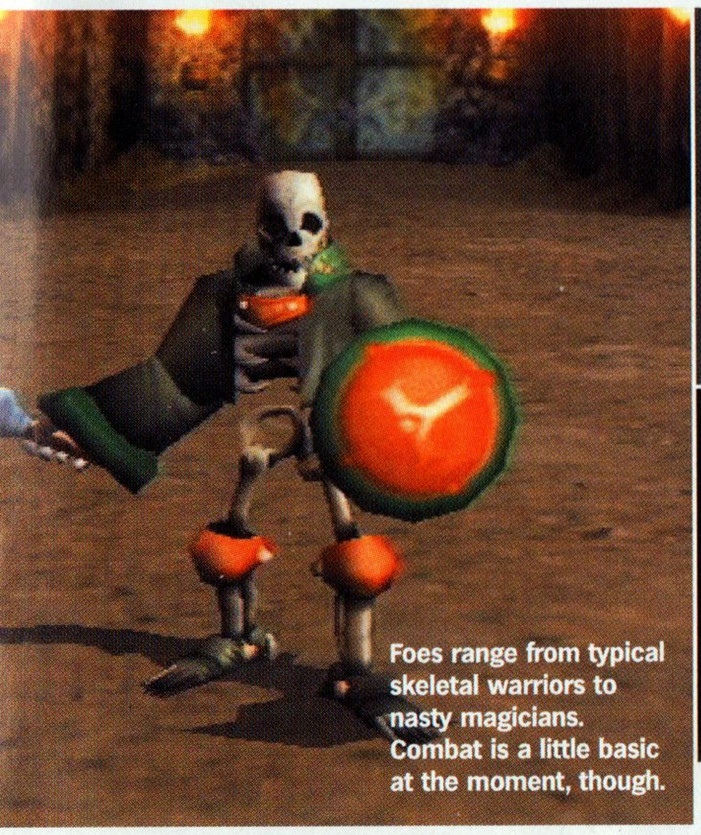


3. Toran looks aghast as a strange, moon-lit figure appears in the night sky – and realises it's not ET in a bicycle basket.



4. The demon unleashes his fireballs and the villagers run for cover inside their straw houses. Fools.





Foes range from typical skeletal warriors to nasty magicians. Combat is a little basic at the moment, though.





Once a village item is discovered, it must be allocated to construct buildings.



Dark Cloud's aesthetic is based on the goggle-eyed manga look, but the bizarre plot lends it a good deal of originality.

PREVIEW

DARK CLOUD

Toran's magical wrist watch enables him to capture the villages for the diorama section of the game. No, really.

a small outhouse. It is even possible to find whole buildings and people in them.

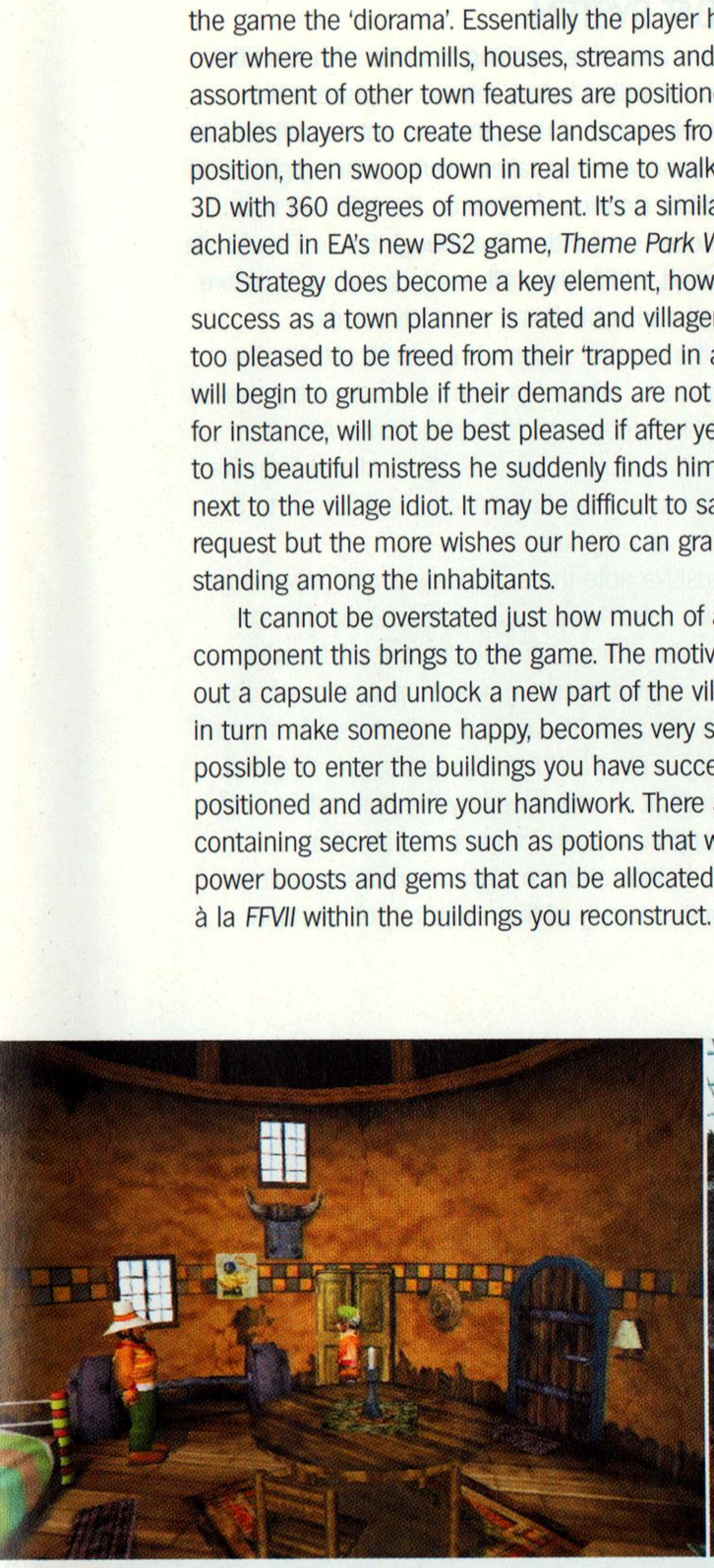
DIORAMA DRAMA

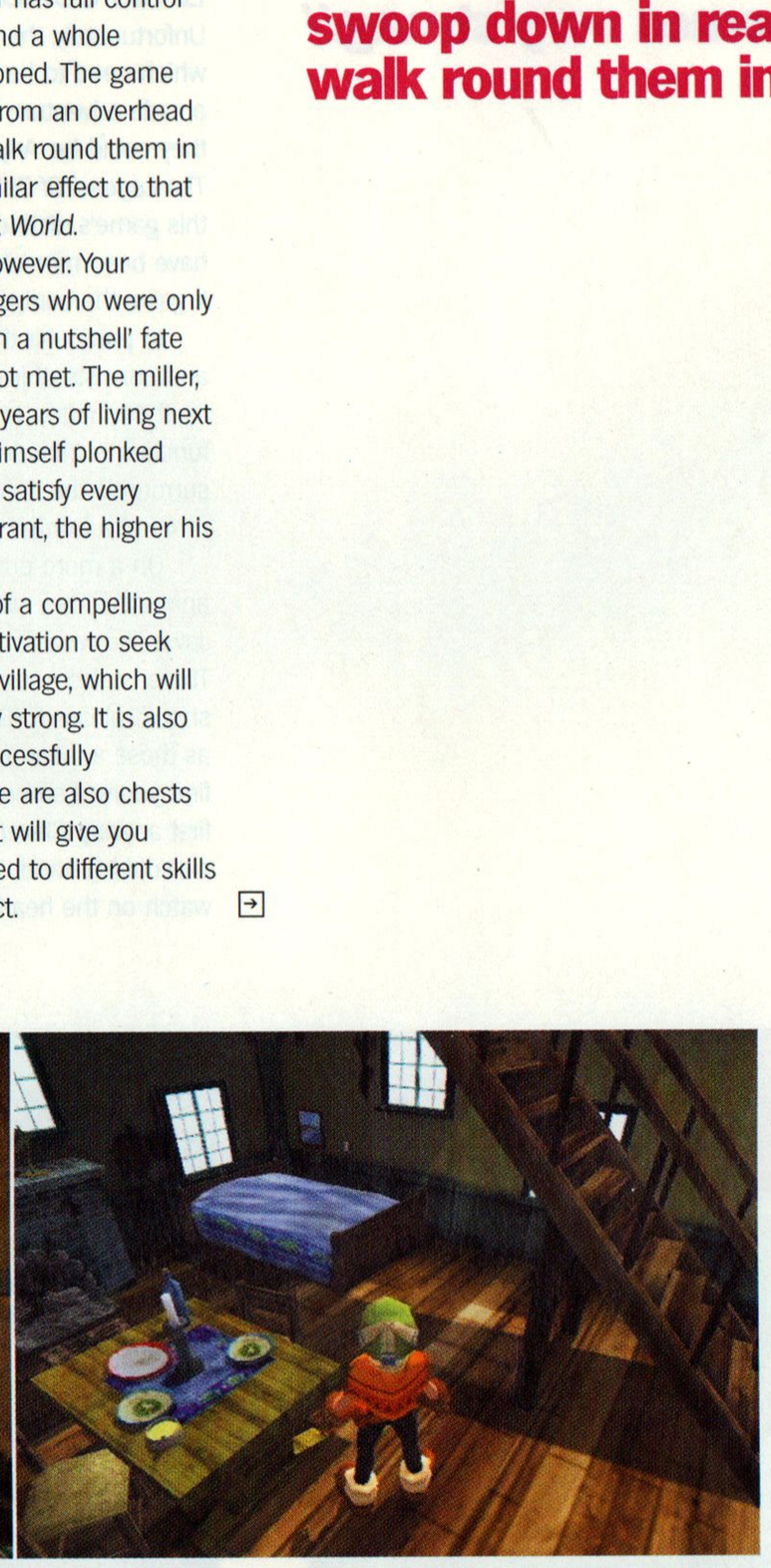
It's an original concept and is already working pleasingly well. Once enough village elements have been discovered in the dungeon areas, our hero must go to the empty plain where the village once existed and reconstruct it. This promises to marry two styles of game – arcade adventure and God sim. *Dark Cloud*'s director, Kentaro Motomura, calls this element of the game the 'diorama'. Essentially the player has full control over where the windmills, houses, streams and a whole assortment of other town features are positioned. The game enables players to create these landscapes from an overhead position, then swoop down in real time to walk round them in 3D with 360 degrees of movement. It's a similar effect to that achieved in EA's new PS2 game, *Theme Park World*.

Strategy does become a key element, however. Your success as a town planner is rated and villagers who were only too pleased to be freed from their 'trapped in a nutshell' fate will begin to grumble if their demands are not met. The miller, for instance, will not be best pleased if after years of living next to his beautiful mistress he suddenly finds himself plonked next to the village idiot. It may be difficult to satisfy every request but the more wishes our hero can grant, the higher his standing among the inhabitants.

It cannot be overstated just how much of a compelling component this brings to the game. The motivation to seek out a capsule and unlock a new part of the village, which will in turn make someone happy, becomes very strong. It is also possible to enter the buildings you have successfully positioned and admire your handiwork. There are also chests containing secret items such as potions that will give you power boosts and gems that can be allocated to different skills à la *FFVII* within the buildings you reconstruct.

//The game enables players to create town landscapes from an overhead position, then swoop down in real-time to walk round them in 3D//





Construct and position a building in diorama mode and you can walk right in and take a look around.



Finding chests around *Dark Cloud*'s cave systems is vital for survival. Potions, gems, bombs, swords and power-ups are all available. Each enhances the hero's abilities to great effect.

IT'S NOT ZELDA YET

It may be the sincerest form of flattery but *Dark Cloud* needs some work before it has the control of *Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*.





Both games use a z-lock function but *Dark Cloud*'s needs perfecting.





Both games use an itinerary screen, though *Dark Cloud*'s is arguably more convoluted.





Note the way that both maps are traced on the screen. Spooky, non?



//The motivation to seek out a capsule and unlock a new part of the village becomes very strong//

Once one 'diorama' has been completed, the friendly wizard takes Toran to a new location and dungeon system to find the next set of capsules. Of course, in keeping with true RPG style, there are many bosses and sub-bosses to deal with along the way. Motomura-san has even implemented other characters who can be selected at key points to help the main hero with his epic task of rebuilding the world and eventually dispersing the threat of those ominous dark clouds.

BASIC COMBAT SYSTEM

Unfortunately, there are some teething troubles with the title which need to be remedied before release. At present the arcade adventure elements of the game are not as polished as they could be. Anyone who has taken even a passing glance at *The Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* on the N64 will note this game's distinctive similarities. But though the feel and style have been mimicked, SCEI's title still needs some work before it gains the control and subtleties it so sorely needs.

In particular the combat system is currently rather basic and consists of just one attack function which can be powered up if the button is left depressed for a short time. A lock-on function is included (the player presses '⊗' and a red square surrounds the nearest enemy) but this can often prove to be more of a burden than a benefit.

On a more positive note the enemies are well drawn and animated. They range from your typical skeletal warriors to Jawa-like wizards who shoot pink fireballs in your direction. There is also a very comprehensive power-up system which should please RPG fanatics. Though not quite as sophisticated as those appearing in the *Final Fantasy* series, you may well find yourself somewhat overwhelmed by the item tables – at first anyway. Cleverly, swords are prone to break after particularly frantic battles and the player must keep a close watch on the health not only of their hero but of his main

TOWN PLANNING

Building your way to success, the *Dark Cloud* way..



By far the most innovative aspect of *Dark Cloud* is the diorama function which gives players the freedom to build whole communities. Once houses and farms are placed down on the surface, Toran can go inside the buildings and talk to the inhabitants. They will give him advice and suggestions on how best to complete the village. This is already proving to be a sophisticated game element, incorporating careful planning, strategy and resource management.





The power meter can be charged up by depressing the attack button.

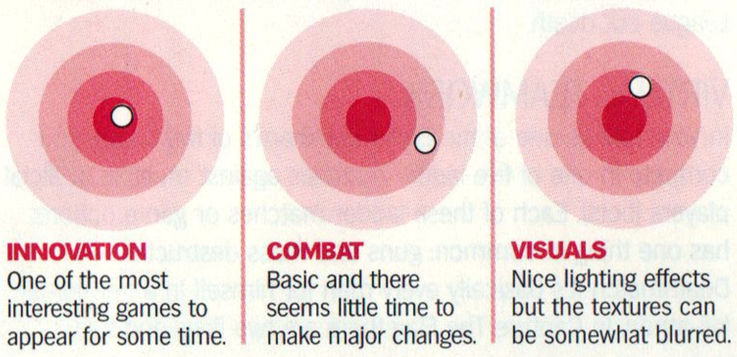
weapon too. Find a weapon boost in one of the chests which litter the caverns and the damage can be repaired, allowing more pain to be inflicted on opponents.

The structure of the cave system is also cleverly implemented. In fact, every time the player enters a dungeon level, it is randomly generated – which potentially lends the game a good deal of durability and replay value. It is noticeable that SCEI has attempted to inject some variety to the proceedings by introducing this feature. Hopefully this should afford the player a fresher experience rather than the more usual situation of having to die and return back to the same old locations.

Dark Cloud was first showcased in an impressive demo at the formal announcement of the PlayStation 2 back in September 1999. Then, it wowed audiences with its depiction of exciting swordplay and smooth camera effects. Much work has gone into the title since this initial demonstration and if some of the control issues are resolved, *Dark Cloud* could be the game to convert many to the wonders of console role-playing adventuring. □

ON TARGET?
DARK CLOUD

It's already due for release in Japan but *Dark Cloud* will need some tweaking to appeal to western tastes.



INNOVATION
One of the most interesting games to appear for some time.

COMBAT
Basic and there seems little time to make major changes.

VISUALS
Nice lighting effects but the textures can be somewhat blurred.



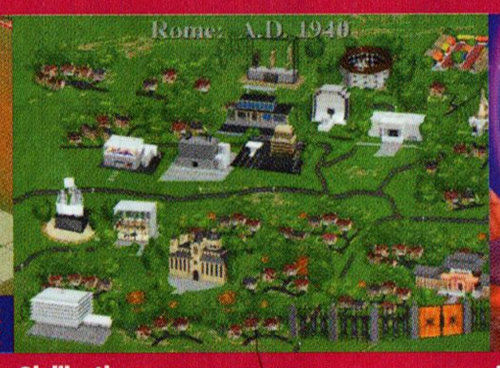
I'VE GOT THE POWER

Five other classic God sims.

Populous
Peter Molyneux's classic Amiga game which founded the genre. Megalomaniacs across the country sublimated their urges and the world became a better place.



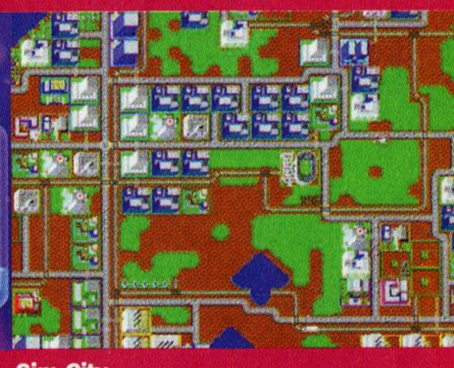
The Sims
Allowed you to have the ultimate power of giving life and then controlling it. A perfect opportunity to have someone else make all the mistakes you've made in life.



Civilisation
The real beauty of Sid Meier's title lay in unleashing a technological terror against your neighbour, who merely owned a couple of archers and a flintlock rifle.



Aqua Aqua: Wetrix 2.0
Zed Two's update of *Wetrix* has to be the most bizarre terra-forming title. There aren't many games in which you have to save a Teletubby from drowning in a test tube.

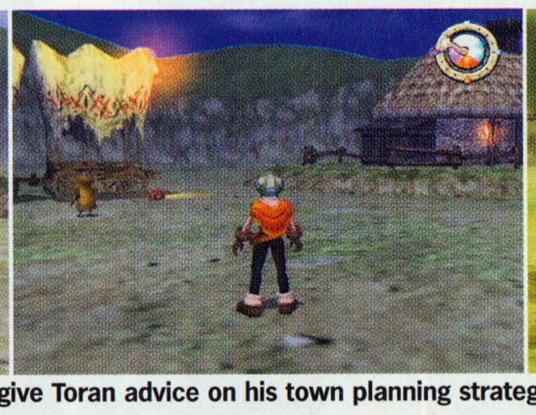


Sim City
Had the player dumping huge coloured blocks on to a map then watching with glee as they slowly turned into little houses.



Make a successful strike and the enemy glows red.







The villagers who are rescued will then give Toran advice on his town planning strategy.





The plot is outlined with the occasional cut scene. They are well produced but mercifully don't go on for hours.

WORDS: NICK JONES

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

Big on the PC and bigger on mindless, graphic violence. *Unreal Tournament* on the PS2 is bound to bring glee and disgust in equal measure. Here's what to expect.

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Epic Games
Players: 1-4
Release: January 2001

Ask any dedicated PC gamer into their online gaming which first-person shooter they like to vent their frustrations on then you'll get one of two answers: *Unreal Tournament* or *Quake III Arena*. Both games are similar in structure, both games are ultraviolent and both games get those adrenaline levels up near dangerous levels. The choice of which is better is an entirely personal one.

But one thing is sure: both games offer unadulterated violent fun on an unprecedented level. But why should you care? Well, that same gaming revolution that has been taking place in offices and bedrooms the world over is now about to take over your living room, thanks to your PS2. And if you haven't experienced the delights of shooting the ass off a stranger then you're in for a treat.

The premise of *Unreal Tournament* is that the future is a dark place. You play a character in the said Tournament (no doubt a future Sky TV has the rights to live matches) competing against other would be sporting heroes. However, the sporting arena is no longer a place where men and women compete in a friendly yet competitive manner, where skill is used to kick balls into nets, to throw balls into hoops or to hit balls with big sticks. The balls have now been replaced with bullets, missiles and homing lasers all in the name of entertaining bloodthirsty TV audiences. The name of the game is gun-fuelled combat and the price of failure is not relegation to the Beazer Homes League but death.

VIRTUAL TEAMWORK

In your role as one of the David Beckham's of the future, you compete in one of five ladder matches against multiple artificial players (bots). Each of these ladder matches or game options has one thing in common: guns and mass destruction. In Deathmatch it's basically every man for himself in a free-for-all kill-athon. In Capture The Flag there are two flags and two

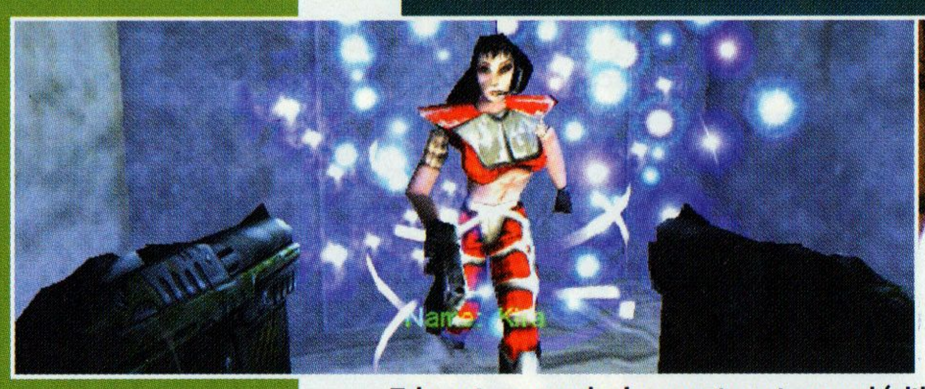
LINK-UP REVIVAL

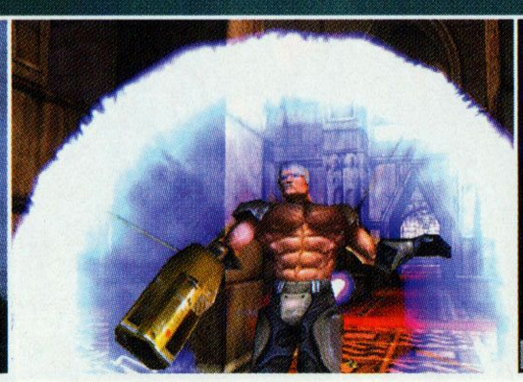
Fancy a bit of eight-player fragging?

Link-up was one of the features sadly missing from the original PlayStation game – though it was great with titles like *Doom* and *WipEout 2097*. Happily it looks like there's going to be a mini revival of link-up gaming with PlayStation 2. *Unreal Tournament* is the first game to take advantage the PS2's i-LINK capabilities, enabling you to hook up two PS2s and compete against up to eight other players. The trouble is you'll need the expensive i-LINK, two TVs and eight controllers – is it really worth the hassle, we ask? Damn straight.



Deathmatch on a viking ship? No problem – *Unreal Tournament* is full of such neat ideas.







Teleports are a nippier way to get around (although death will find you in the end)...

bases, and the goal is to capture the opponent's flag while defending your own. Domination mode is played in teams of three or more. Specific areas have to be captured and then defended from the other team in order to score points. The longer your team occupies a base, the more points you get – in this case the first to 100 points wins.

In Assault mode, our undoubted favourite, a team of players must attempt to capture a base while the opposing team tries to defend. When either the team captures the base or the defenders successfully keep them out, the teams switch around. This mode is the most innovative part of the game, making a brave attempt to change the formula of the sometimes-stale deathmatch game. Each of the various arenas requires you to think about different tactics, and alternative ways to attack and defend. For example, on one level a frigate takes the role of 'base', and the attacking team's objective is to get in, blow up a generator, get into the control room and fire off the ship's guns. You can try to get in via a gangway, but this is likely to be heavily guarded by the defending team. Instead, why not take a look at the equipment you've been given to use? Among all the guns you'll find an aqua lung – maybe there's a way into the ship from under the water? Sure enough, there's a sub bay under the ship and if the defending team are oblivious to this, it's possible to penetrate the ship and fire those guns without detection. Superb. Finally the Challenge mode pits you against champions of the *Unreal Tournament* in a one-on-one battle to the death.

The intelligence of the computer-controlled bots is impressive, but it's a pity you can't issue orders – like encouraging your team members to follow you, or telling them to storm the base at a certain point. However, they will try to think for themselves – some will follow you, while others will defend strategic areas and others will attack the enemy. There's also a fair amount of radio chatter between team mates, giving you a real sense of how the battle is going.





Valuable weapons are always placed in precarious positions.



Your mission is to storm this occupied ship – but how do you get in?



Blue, glowing guys are best avoided – this indicates extra killing power.



Trap someone in here, push the button and watch them explode.



Kill several people in a row and you'll be rewarded with a rating.



You can't issue orders to your computer-controlled team mates but they're pretty smart anyway and will react to each situation accordingly.

One of our main concerns with *Unreal Tournament* is how the game plays using the Dual Shock 2 controller. In spite of the friendly adaptations made to accommodate the pad, using can be a clumsy affair; control typically involves looking with one analogue stick, moving with the other, then fiddling with the other buttons on your pad to change weapons, jump and fire. Not easy. Even though there are multiple controller set-ups, it's hard to find one that works as well as the tried-and-trusted method of PC control – the mouse and keyboard technique. Thankfully a mouse and keyboard can be connected to the PS2 via its USB ports, and although it's a somewhat unwieldy control interface, it makes playing *Unreal Tournament* a much more satisfying experience.

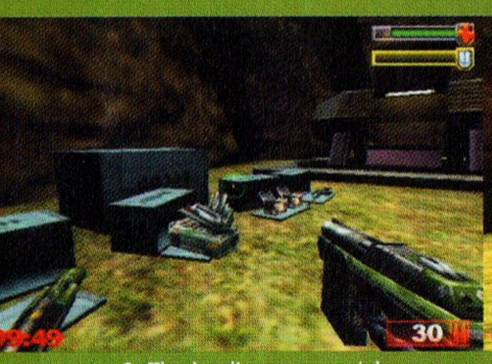
WEAPON WONDER

Naturally comparisons are going to be made with the PS2's other multiplayer blast-'em-up, *TimeSplitters*, and on playing the US version of *Unreal Tournament* initial impressions are good. One area that makes for favourable comparison is the quality of the game's weaponry. You might think that this would be a superficial difference, but the sheer variety on offer here leads to some great variation in tactics. Each weapon has a primary and secondary function: the rocket launcher can be used to simply fire rockets (holding fire longer fills the chamber with more rockets) or it can be used to throw rockets in a grenade-launcher fashion.

Likewise, energy weapons can be used like machine guns or to fire a single blast of highly destructive energy. *Unreal Tournament* also possesses one of the most destructive and cool weapons this side of a Middle East Arms Fair – The Redeemer. This monstrous beast unleashes one huge mini-nuclear explosion with a blast radius that can wipe out several opponents at once – even yourself if you're not careful. Worthy of mention is The Redeemer's secondary fire mode, that gives a first-person view of the missile in-flight, allowing players to steer

TAKE NO PRISONERS

A lesson in how to raid your enemy's base...



1. The landing area – pick up your weapons and head out.



2. The main castle, guarded by automatic rocket launchers – how to get in?



3. Go round the side and shoot off the chains to open the door.



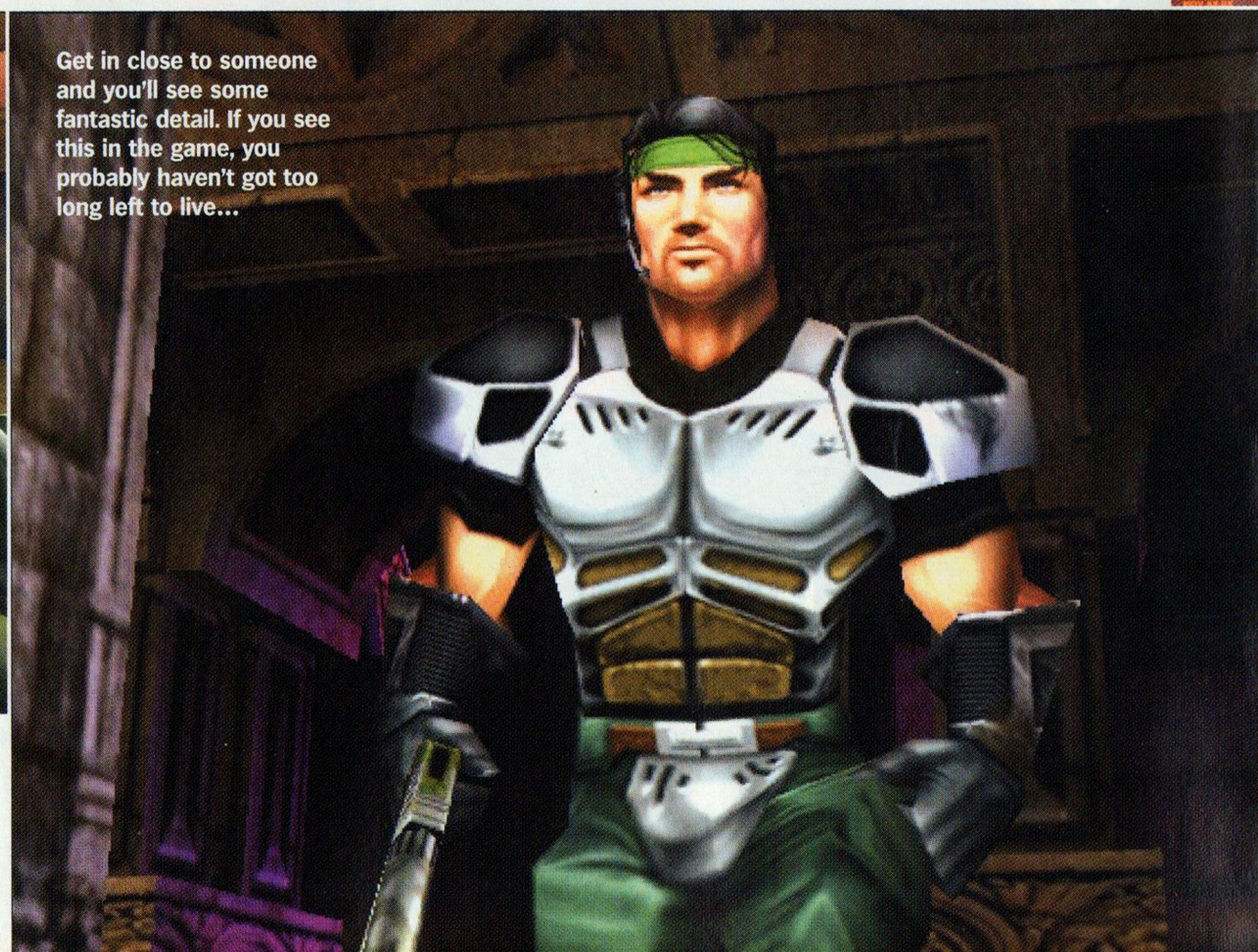
4. Once inside, find the crystal room. Now open the doors and...



5. ...blow that sucker to oblivion. Mission complete.



Capture The Flag – defend your flag while capturing the enemy's. *(Like, duh, Nick... – Ed)*



Get in close to someone and you'll see some fantastic detail. If you see this in the game, you probably haven't got too long left to live...

the weapon around corners and down the throat of unlucky adversaries. Other gadgets such as the Translocator (a personal teleporter), Anti-Grav Boots and the Invisibility Shield make the experience more interesting than just a straight blast. Epic Games has fortunately kept most of the ultraviolence that makes it such an addictive and hilarious game. Opposition warriors, upon being hit by a missile, burst into a spinning mess of entrails and spleens, that gaily bounce against walls and down stairs.

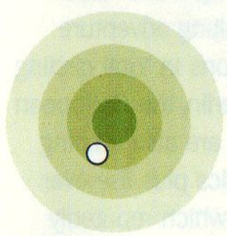
However, *TimeSplitters* is currently the fastest kid on the block. While four players on one screen still runs super-smoothly on *TimeSplitters*, *Unreal Tournament* chugs like the PS2 is trying to compute the meaning of life in addition to all that on-screen mayhem – a major drawback when trying to frag your mates. But the developers assure us this will be remedied by the time the game hits UK shores.

The other potential drawback is that we won't get to play *Unreal Tournament* over the Internet until Sony launches its online service sometime next autumn – then we will be able to finally play it in all its claret-soaked, gory glory against human opponents the world over. □

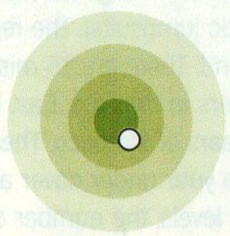
//*Unreal Tournament* also possesses one of the coolest and destructive weapons this side of a Middle East arms fair – The Redeemer//

ON TARGET?
UNREAL TOURNAMENT

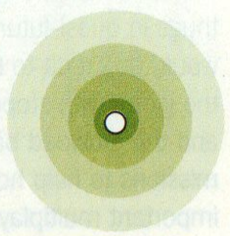
The US version is out already. It contains a few flaws, which should be ironed out in time for the release over here.



GRAPHICS
Lovely-looking but suffers from slow-down at times.



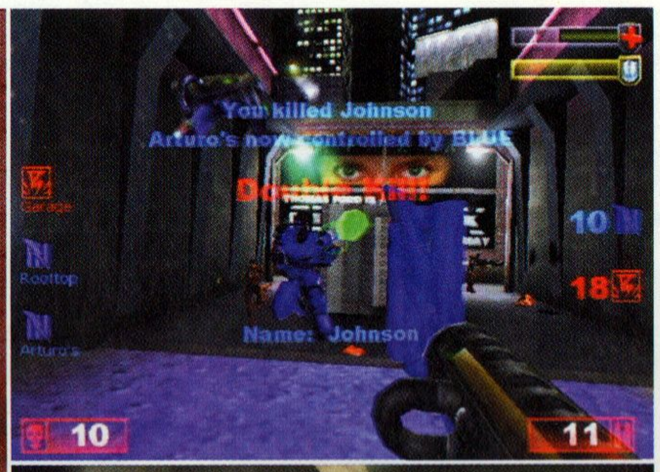
GAMEPLAY
Almost identical to the PC version but for inferior controls.



ULTRA VIOLENCE
Always going to give videogames a bad name.



Sniper rifle – that most satisfying of weapons.

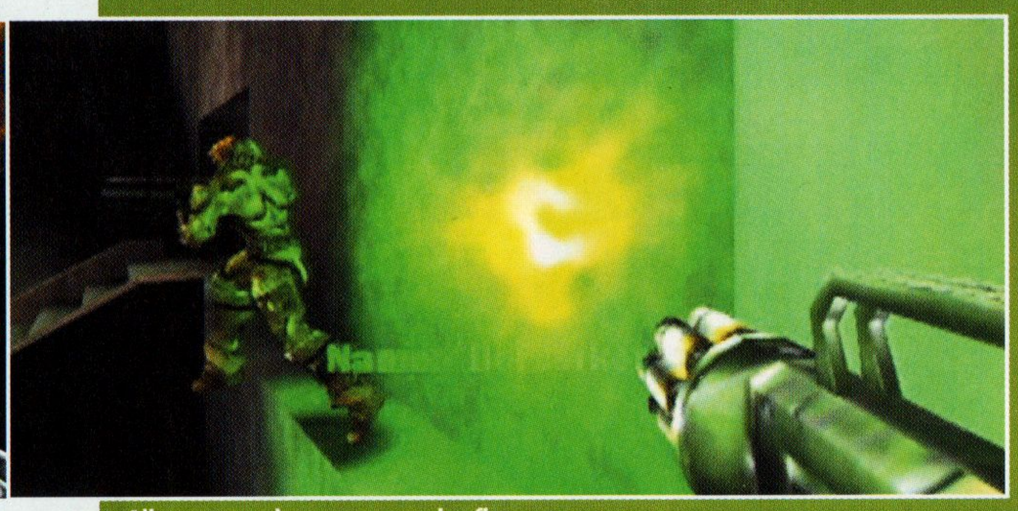




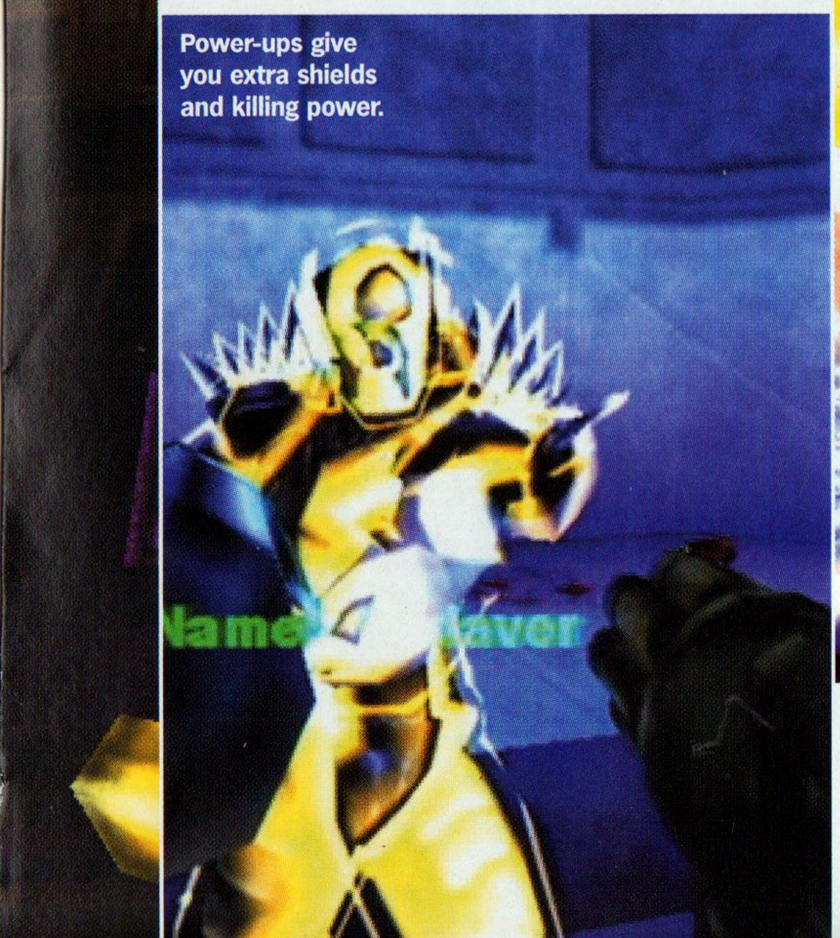
Some weapons work better at close range.



Deathmatch in orbit – imaginative levels abound.



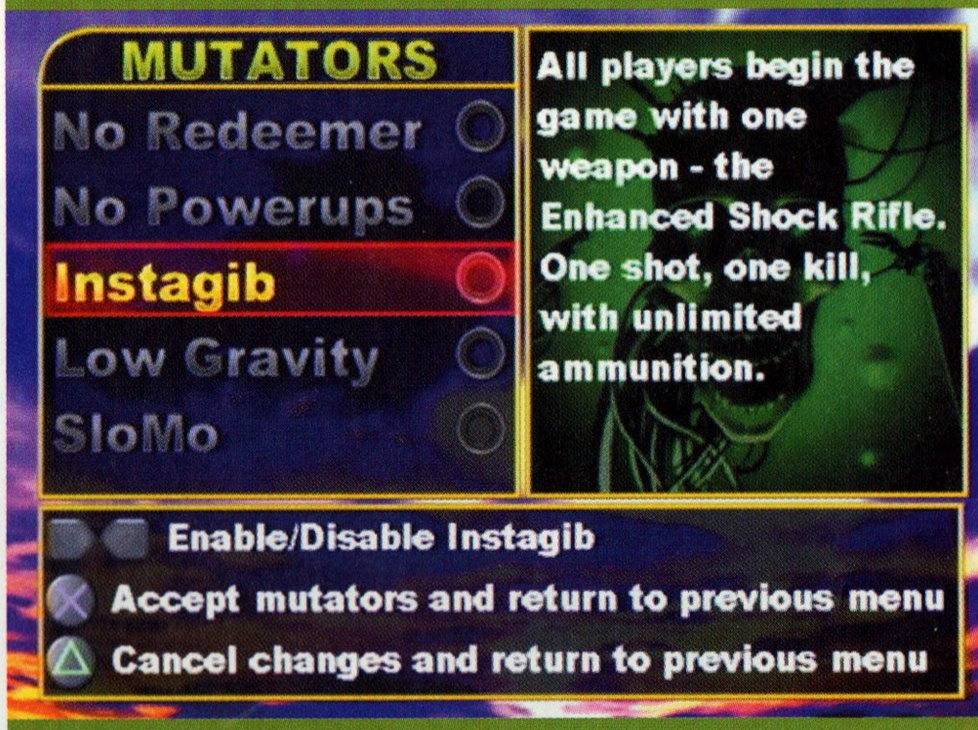
All weapons have a secondry fire.



Power-ups give you extra shields and killing power.

CREATE-A-GAME

Mutate the options to your heart's content.



Apart from the 15 PS2-exclusive levels, *Unreal Tournament* offers a Mutators mode that you won't find in the PC version. You can use this to customise your game – speed things up or slow things down to lend some John Woo-style action to the proceedings. Make the game 'one-hit kills' or 'low gravity'… the list is endless. And ace.

WORDS: BEN LAWRENCE

NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

Widely acclaimed as the best single-player PC shooter since *Half-Life*, *No One Lives Forever* is a key PS2 release for Fox Interactive.

Publisher: Fox Interactive
Developer: Monolith Productions
Players: 1-4
Release: Late 2001

Imagine the N64's Joanna 'Perfect' Dark time-warped back to the Sixties, her streamlined black catsuit resprayed in day-glo orange, titanium shin pads exchanged for white patent leather go-go boots and you'll have some idea what *No One Lives Forever* is all about. It's basically 007 by way of *Austin Powers*, and while not an out-and-out comedy, it's certainly got a *Casino Royale* sense of the absurd. Or, to put it another way, exploding lipsticks, robotic poodles, homicidal barmaid-divas, rocket launching briefcases, acid perfume and a cigarette lighter with a Groove-Lite Sure Fire Arc-Welder head – we don't know what it does, but it sounds great.

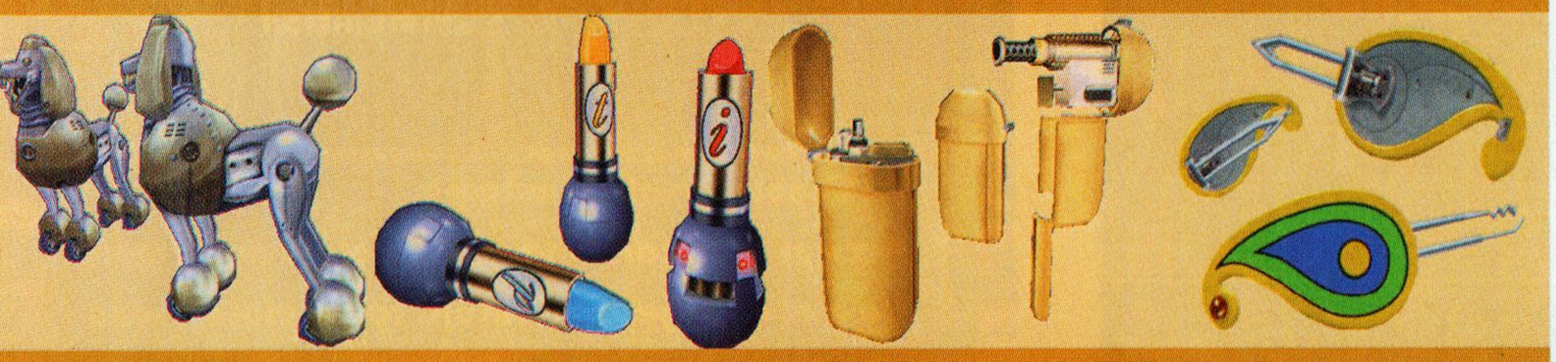
Not only should *NOLF* be a great game, but one that brings a smile to the lips and a sparkle to the eye. It's a game where idly chatting guards are blessed with dialogue so good you'll want to play levels again, just to catch those bits of detail that you may have missed before. The cut-scenes are stylish and the music intelligently cued to the pace of gameplay, moment to moment, beat for beat. All adding to the atmosphere that breeds excitement and suspense within the game.

The 1,700-polygon centrepiece of the game is Cate Archer, a thief-turned-superspy. Initially sidelined by Sixties sexism, she's plunged into frontline action after the decimation of her colleagues by the precisely titled HARM (a group of terrorists that include, amongst other things female ninjas and hired thugs in quasi-futuristic jumpsuits). The resulting adventure would do credit to Bond. There are 15 missions in total circling the globe with stopovers in the Alps, East Berlin, the Caribbean and the crowded bazaars of Morocco. There are also training missions to help hone your under cover antics plus the ever important multiplayer levels, the number of which reputedly barge into double figures.

In an opening level deftly lifted from *Charlie's Angels*, Cate tumbles out of a jet at 50,000 feet and gets engaged in

GROOVY GADGETS

No spy thriller would be complete without some cool gizmos, but *No One Lives Forever* scales new heights of innovation with the following:



UNITY P-42I Canine Persuader
Features: Starter ripcord, Alloy wheels, Pheromone emitter.

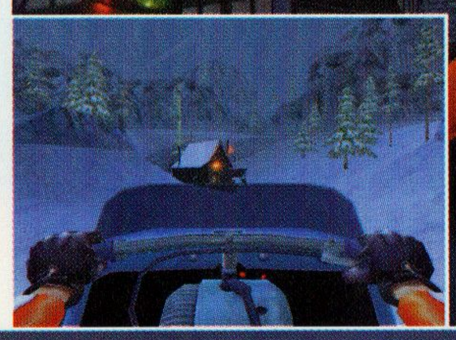
UNITY Model L-4 Explosive Lipsticks
Features: Poisonous and Proximity Timed Impact Lipsticks.

UNITY Model BIC-4 Cigarette Lighter Welder
Features: Groove-Lite Sure Fire, Titanium welder-head.

UNITY Model B-13 Multi-purpose barrette
Features: Lockpick and Weapon modes.



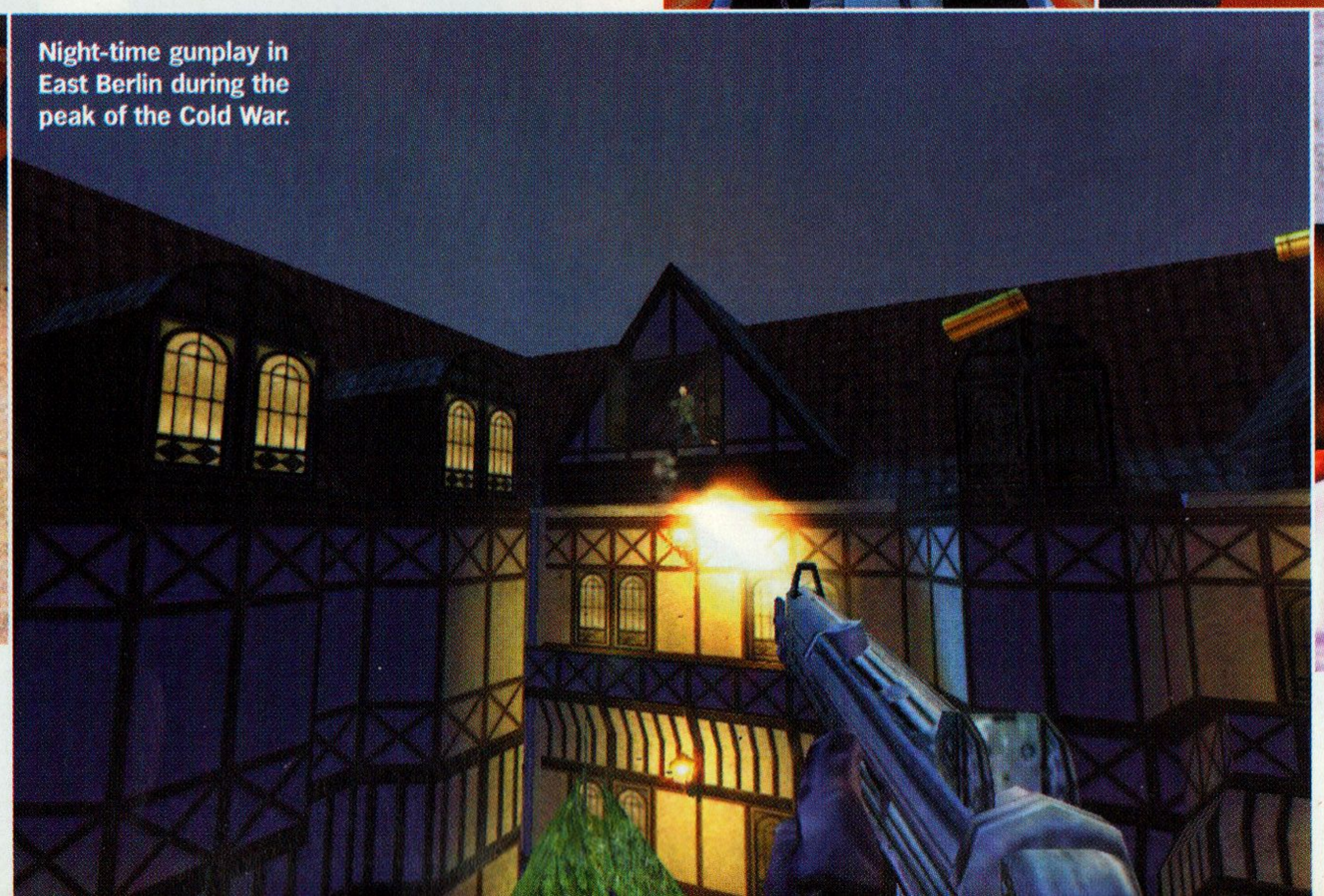
Miss Archer gets to travel by both snowmobile and Triumph motorbike.







Cate puts maternal instincts on hold and offs the opposition.



Night-time gunplay in East Berlin during the peak of the Cold War.



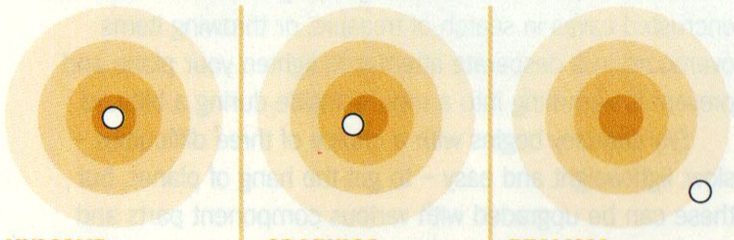
dramatic gunplay with parachuting terrorists. Another level takes place in a sunken ship patrolled by beautifully animated sharks, while the Moroccan level sees Cate play guardian angel to a bumbling American diplomat, taking out his would-be assassins with a sniper rife. A Monolith spokesman also commented that all the levels would be liberally sprinkled with "nubile female vixens." Would you expect anything less?

Although the PC version comes with ten multiplayer levels for play over the Internet, the PS2 version aims to include a split-screen version for more intimate combat. Both single and multiplayer modes share a sizeable range of weapons, some 30 in all, ranging from a crossbow to an AK-47, poison barrettes to the inevitable grenade launcher.

TimeSplitters is currently king of the PS2 hill as regards FPS games, but where the *GoldenEye* renegades jettisoned plot for arcade action, Monolith has used a far longer development period to develop a genuinely unique atmosphere for *NOLF*, with some superb set-pieces. We know this is a good game; the question now is whether Monolith's LithTech wizardry can master Sony's black box? Early indications say yes. Messrs Bond and Powers would be proud. Baby. □

ON TARGET?
NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

A *Charlie's Angels*-scale blockbuster on PC, it could elbow Lara aside as the PS2s most enjoyable girl-power release.



HUMOUR
A breath of fresh air after too many Lara clones.

GRAPHICS
We expect the PS2 version to surpass the PC version.

REALISM
Was MI5's Stella Rimmington an Elite model? No.



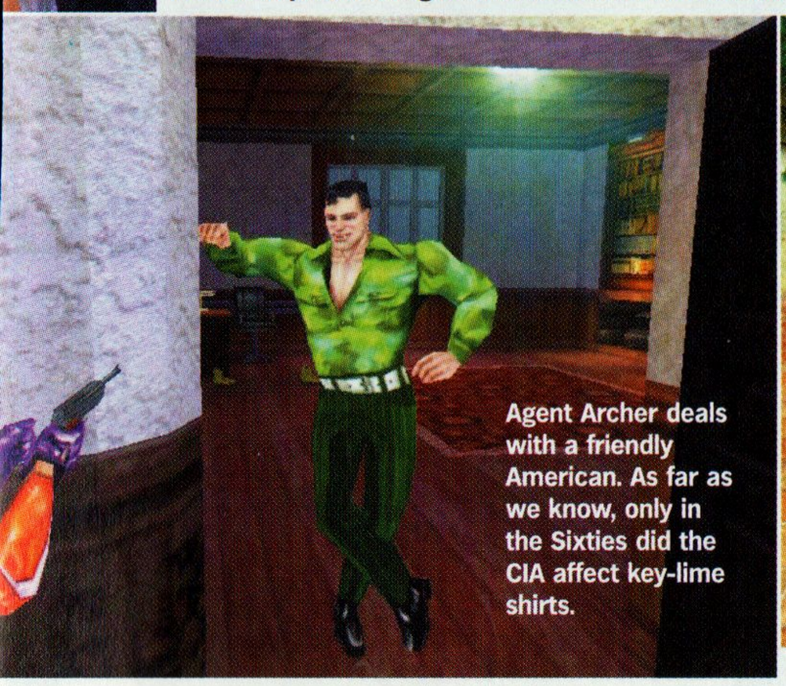
SMARTER THAN SMERSH

In tragic news for lazy gamers everywhere, Monolith Productions has eliminated a whole host of highly desirable, dumb bad guy tactics.

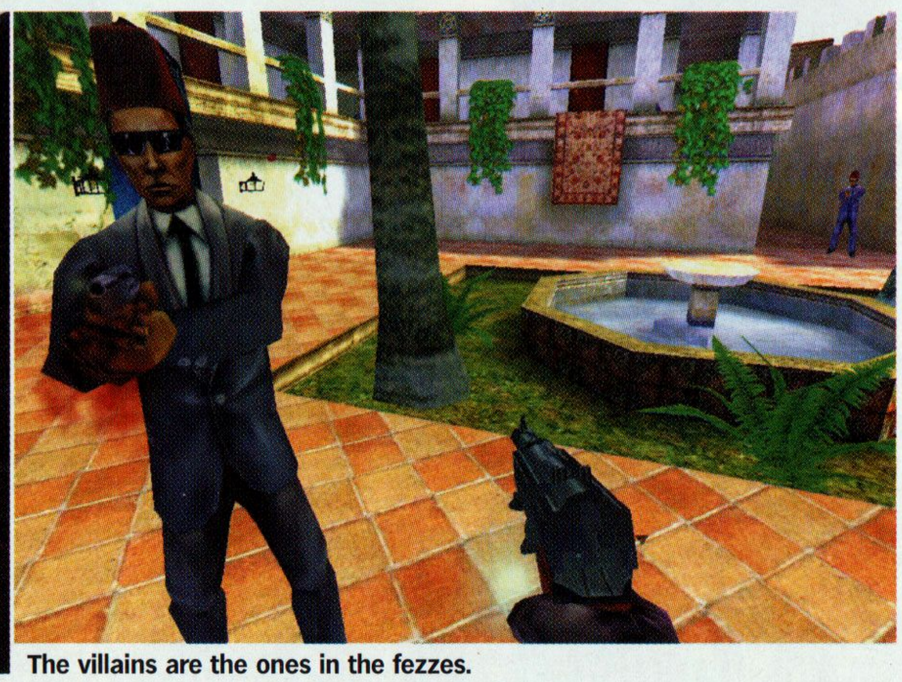


Every US Army standard issue M-79 grenade launcher comes with a guaranteed fireworks display starter kit.

Trouble in paradise. Agent Archer takes out some Caribbean hoods with extreme prejudice.



Agent Archer deals with a friendly American. As far as we know, only in the Sixties did the CIA affect key-lime shirts.



The villains are the ones in the fezzes.



Ignoring crumpled bodies, gunshots and other obvious signs of things being well?
Sadly not, Cate's opponents react to no less than 11 stimuli, including footprints left in the snow, enemy flashlights and body odour (possibly).

Easily predictable, identikit behaviour patterns?
Again, no. Each character type will also react differently, with varying degrees of paranoia for individual ninjas and fez-wearing gunmen.

Every villain is an island with the effortless team spirit of Chelsea.
Definitely not – these enemies actually seem to communicate with each other, covering each other with suppressing gunfire and organising searches when you're cowering in a corner.

WORDS: BEN LAWRENCE

SKY ODYSSEY

Those magnificent men in their flying machines have so much fun – now you can too.

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: SCEJ
Players: 1
Release: Summer 2001

Fear not. Hush the disquiet mumblings of a PC-style flight sim invasion of PlayStation 2. Silence those concerns about the PS2 playing host to a renowned nerdy genre. See, what *Sky Odyssey* offers is beyond simulation. It's a mouthwatering wedge of innovation that has a distinct lack of respect for gravity.

Sky Odyssey presents the player with a wealthy combination of expertly crafted *Driver*-style missions and easy handling that would make Biggles and his starched scarf wilt with anticipation. Rather than an accurate recreation of the complex physics of flight this is a game of pure arcade roots – forget about altimeters and wind shear factor, just grab your Dual Shock and fly.

Although it's still a considerable time before you'll be able to clamber into the cockpit, shout 'chocs away' and witness the acrobatic aeronautics for yourself, developer, SCEJ, is finely tuning *Sky Odyssey*'s game engine and carrying out many safety checks. So when it hits the shelves next summer you can rest assured that this should be a very tight flying game.

The missions at this early preview stage though are already titillating the senses, and involve pushing your wind-buffeted craft to the limits. If you're not flying through narrow, heart-stopping ravines, you're corkscrewing away from rock-falls, trying to hook up with an emergency fuel train as you spill aviation fuel from a ruptured tank, darting through darkened stalactite-encrusted caves in search of treasure, or throwing items overboard in a desperate attempt to lighten your plane and prevent it slamming into a mountainside during a blizzard.

Sky Odyssey begins with a choice of three difficulties – slow, lightweight and easy – to get the hang of planes, but these can be upgraded with various component parts and attachments as you progress through the levels via daring aeronautical feats. Stunts that invariably involve pushing yourself as close to danger as is humanely possible without

THREE'S COMPANY

There might only three planes to choose from at the beginning, but what a choice!



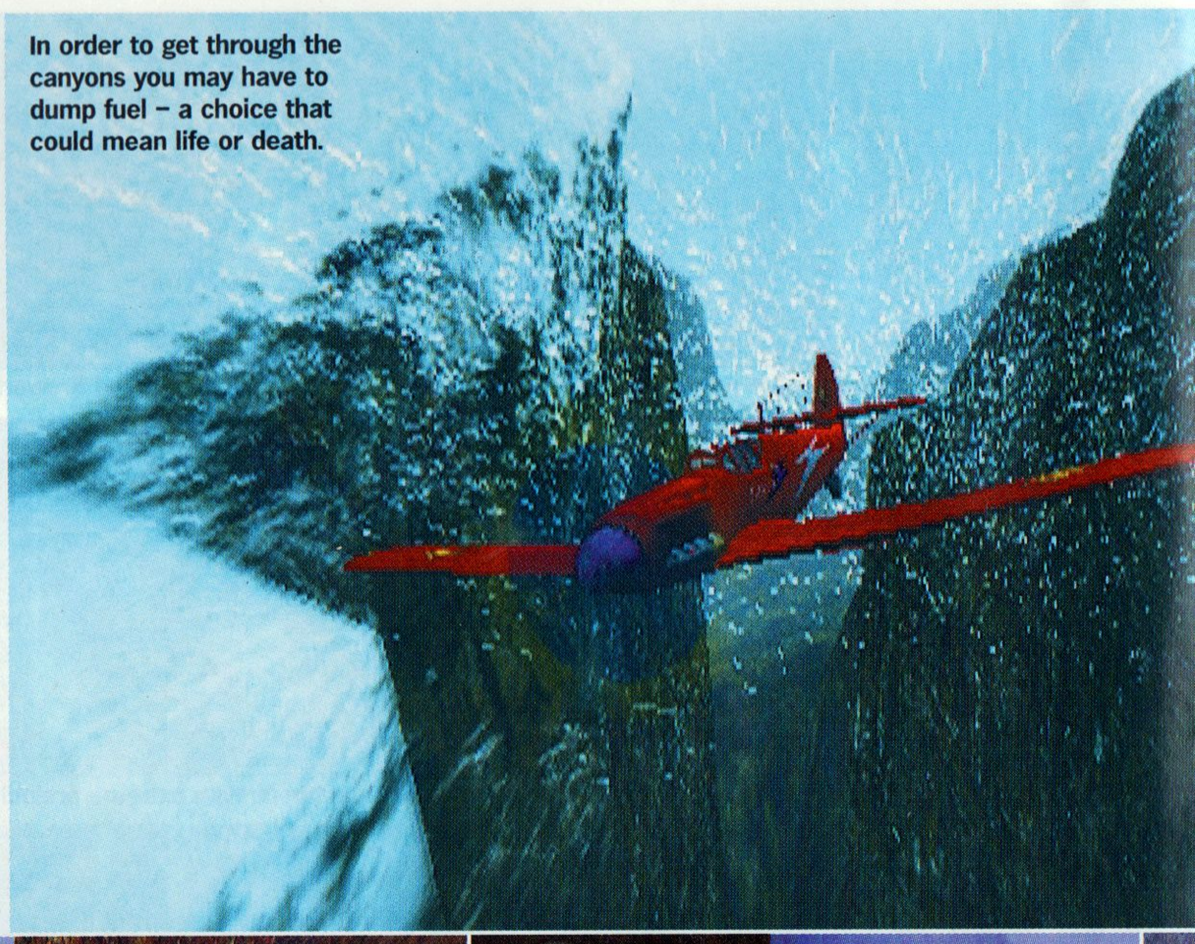
Bf-109 Custom
It looks like a Spitfire and flies like a dream. The best of the initial three planes on offer. Let's hope there's more where that came from…
Good for: Just about everything.
Bad for: Um, nothing.

Pulse Jet 'Test Type'
Is it a jet? Is it a prop? Whatever it is, the fact that it remains airborne is a miracle. Handles like a motorised horse and seems to like flying very close to the ground.
Good for: Size
Bad for: Stability

The Swordfish Mk1 Custom
Yellow, old and gets thrown about by the wind like a handful of dry leaves. Scarf, flying jacket, goggles and stiff upper lip included.
Good for: Nostalgia
Bad for: Everything else



Ladies and gentlemen, we are now cruising at approximately three feet.



In order to get through the canyons you may have to dump fuel – a choice that could mean life or death.



You're low on fuel and docked on a fuel train...





...but what happens when you reach the tunnel just around this corner?

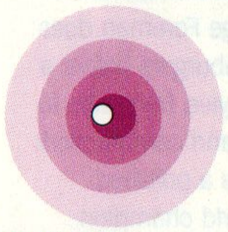
jettisoning limbs and every form of daring are justly rewarded with upgrades and extensions to make your tiny, weather-worn machine the king of the skies.

The game looks relatively old school at the moment. The graphics are more PSone than PS2 while fogging is more than just atmospheric, with long stretches of desert and sea quickly becoming tiresome. These admittedly major niggles should be optimised by the time of release but it's that handling that will grip you. Every inclination, the slightest added pressure on the analogue sticks, every tilt and arc feels instinctively right and not concentrating on cockpit instruments makes the whole experience even more enjoyable, if still somewhat unnerving.

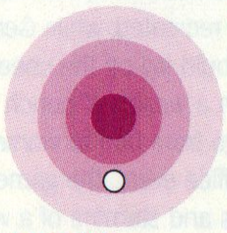
Sky Odyssey, although fully playable at this stage, still needs a great deal of work to be done on it: incorporating different planes (a Spitfire, Hercules-style jet and sea plane are currently in development), initiating weather systems and integrating more detailed environments are just a start, and hopefully we'll see a reduction in fogging too. Once the story line is fully revealed and a complete map is available to traverse, we could just be looking at one of the PS2's most surprising successes. Chocs, quite literally, away. □

ON TARGET? SKY ODYSSEY

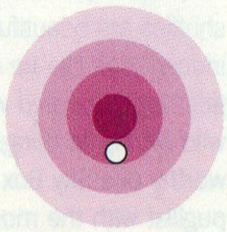
Too far off to draw conclusions but looking remarkable already. It also plays like a blinder.



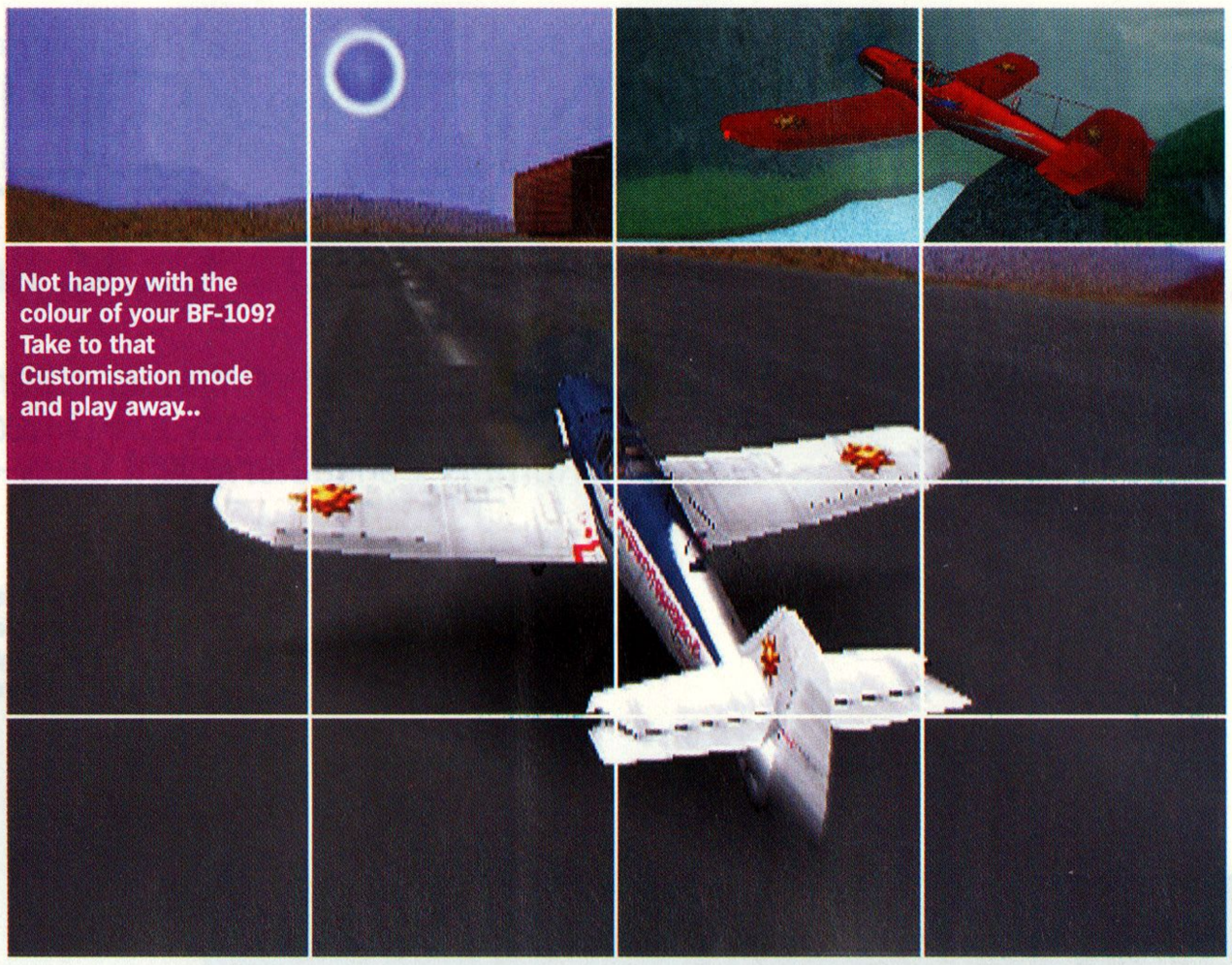
HANDLING
Born to be flown. Smooth and silky like posh chocolate.



FOGGING
Too much to forgive at this point but could be changed.



MISSIONS
Inventive and riddled with the 'one more go' factor.



Not happy with the colour of your BF-109? Take to that Customisation mode and play away..



If you see a landslide, don't fly towards it!



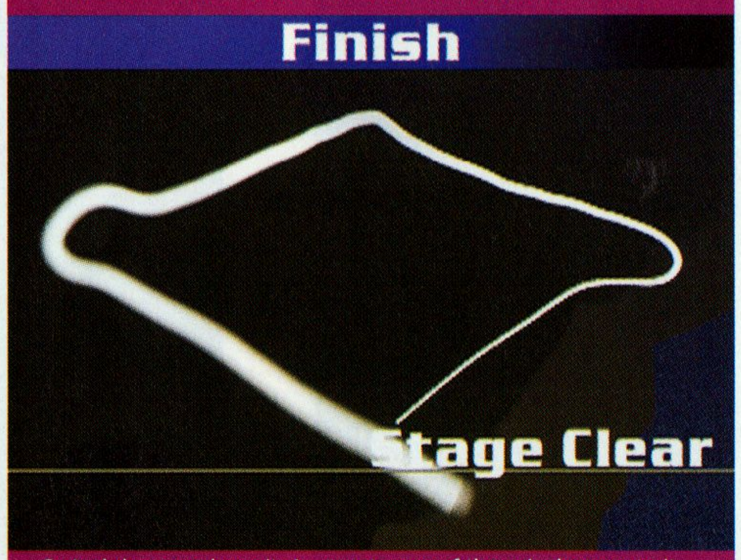


LOOP-DA-LOOP

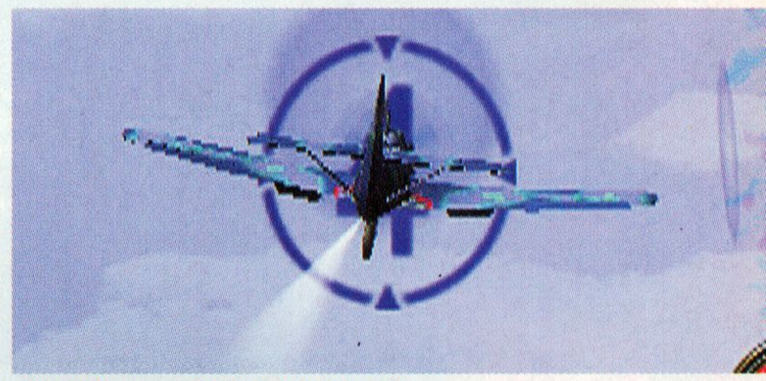
Not only are you given the chance to fly daring missions through caverns and snow storms but *Sky Odyssey* has a lighter side to its cloud-popping gameplay. You get to draw pictures in the sky with your smoke trails. The more intricate your designs, the greater your points bonus.



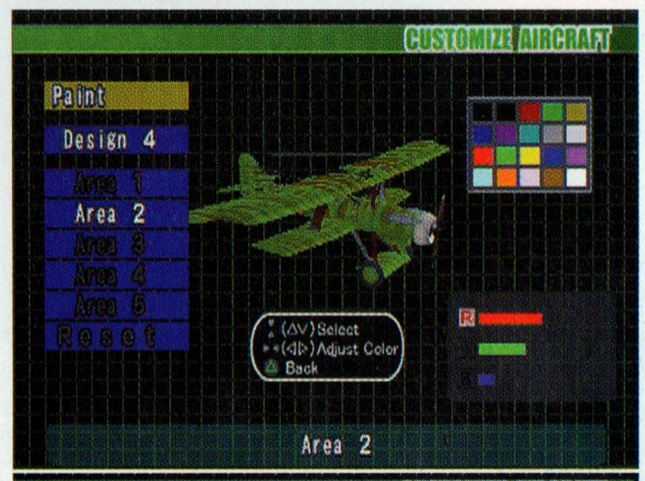
1. "For my first trick, I shall be drawing a replica of Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*. I shall begin by capturing the mysterious smile..."

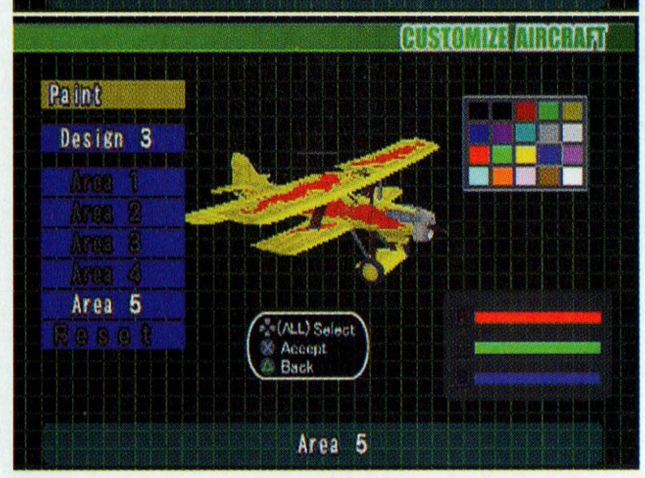


2. And there we have it. An exact copy of the priceless portrait, faithfully recreated in a heady mixture of fuel vapour and smoke.



***Pilot Wings*, anybody? Suit yerself.**





Whatever your taste, you can fully customise your aircraft, turning it from stealth killing machine to flying kaleidoscope of psychedelic, vomit-inducing florescence in minutes.

WORDS: STEVE MERRETT

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001

EA's heavyweight contender enters the PS2 ring, ready to KO *Ready 2 Rumble 2*'s featherweight fancy-dans.

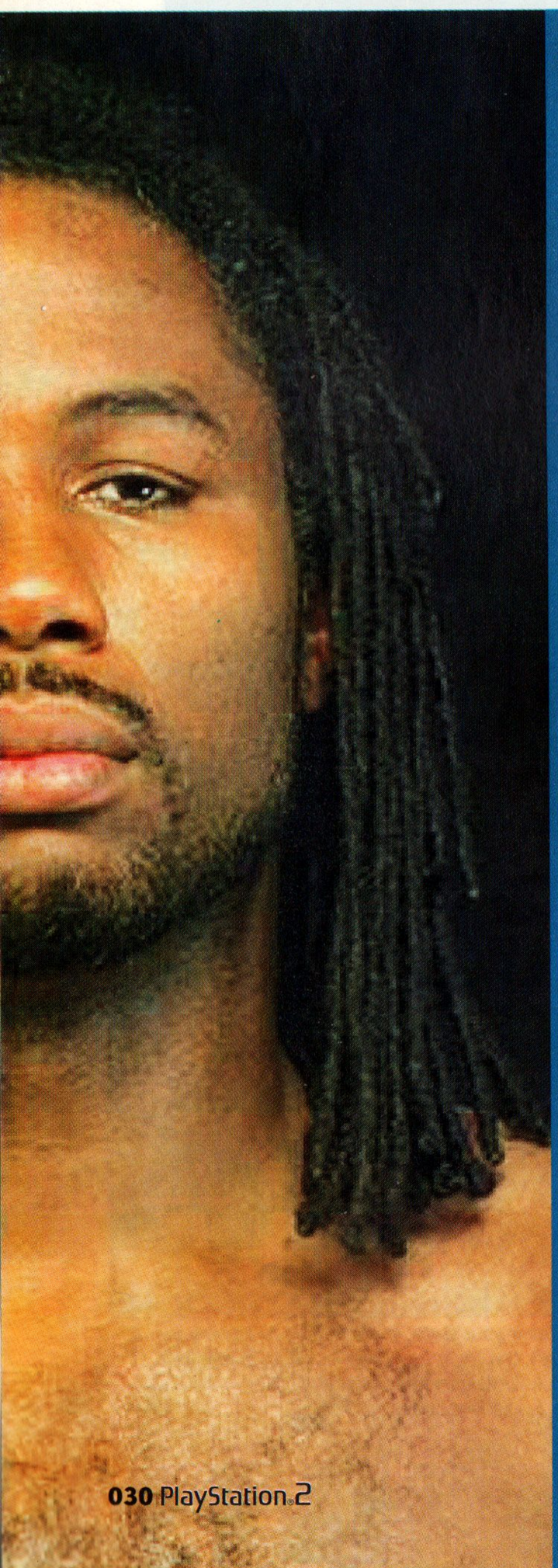
Publisher: EA
Developer: Black Ops
Players: 1-2
Release: March 2001

Bam! With a flurry of head punches and follow-up body blows, *Knockout Kings 2001* is truly a heavyweight boxing game. While Midway's *Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2* offers more comedic and arcade-orientated fare, the EA game is all about the blood, sweat and tears of a big title fight – with blood being the most important addition. For the first time ever in a boxing game, *Knockout Kings 2001*'s pugilists actually show the damage of being smacked in the head by a heavy leather glove. Thus, as instantly recognisable on-screen versions of Lennox Lewis, George Foreman and Muhammad Ali pile into each other, the visible cuts and bruises that mark the fighters' faces are a far better indicator of who's ahead on points than the genre's customary cop-out energy bar.

It's amazing how such a simple idea can add a new dimension to a game, but *Knockout Kings 2001* has the good looks and graceful moves of a young Cassius Clay, so the visible injuries merely emphasise that this is the closest take on boxing short of strapping on gloves.

EA's obsessive quest for realism has even extended to using a complex scanning system to ensure that the reach, musculature and facial expressions of the game's champions are identical to those of the real combatants. While it sounds like a lot of needless hassle, the results of this 'Cyber Scan' technique speak for themselves. Lennox Lewis's trademark shuffles are beautifully recreated, while George Foreman does indeed look like he should lay off the cheeseburgers before a title bout. Coupled with a wealth of punch styles, from jabs to wild flailing as things go from bad to worse, and camera work worthy of a Sky Box Office event, the game is a polished pugilist with the moves and stamina of a world champion.

Previous PSone versions of *Knockout Kings* have always been rather unwieldy. The downside to the series' realistic moves has been sluggish controls that make every boxer seem



LENNOX LEWIS: THIS IS YOUR LIFE...

Swot up on the undoubted star of *Knockout Kings 2001* and the current heavyweight champion of the world.

Born: 2 September 1965
Height: 6' 5"
Weight: 240lbs

Fight career:

☐ Moved to Canada, aged 12. Set amateur boxing record of 75 wins and seven defeats, with 58 KOs. Beats Riddick Bowe – a future world champion – in his last amateur bout to win the Super Heavyweight gold medal for Canada in the 1988 Seoul Olympics

☐ Made professional debut on 27 June, 1989. KOs Al Malcolm in two rounds. Follows with 20 straight victories, 17 by KO. Only ten opponents last to third round.

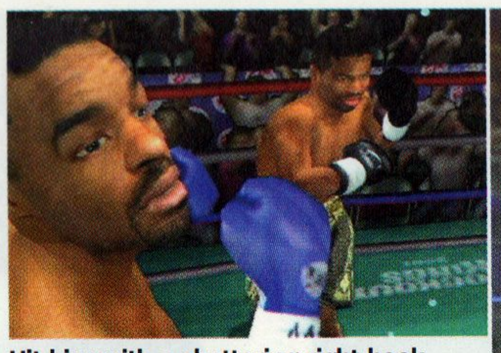
☐ Beats 'Razor' Ruddock (not the lardy Crystal Palace defender) on 31 October, 1992, for the chance to take on then champion Riddick Bowe for the Heavyweight championship. Bowe refuses to honour agreement. WBC strips Bowe of title and gives it to Lewis.

☐ Successfully defends crown in fights against Tony Tucker, Frank Bruno and Phil Jackson. Suffers only defeat in professional career against Oliver McCall when referee halts fight in second round.

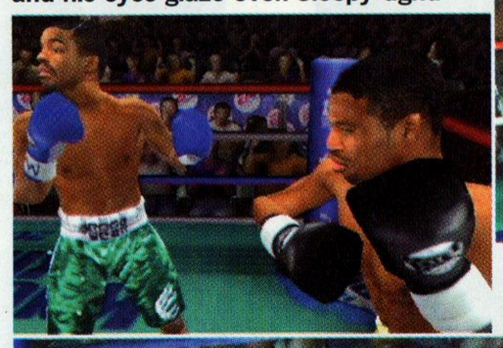
☐ Wins fight against Lionel Butler with a fifth round KO and is promised fight against winner of McCall/Bruno bout. WBC offers fight to Mike Tyson instead. Tyson wins but refuses to fight Lewis, despite offer of $45m. Tyson surrenders title.

☐ Lewis fights McCall again for title. A fifth round KO sees him victorious. Defends title three times, before losing crown in contentious draw with Evander Holyfield, but Lewis again takes title on 13 November 1999, winning the rematch.

☐ Lamps David Tua to within an inch of his life. *OPS2* recreates this for screenshots.



Hit him with a shattering right hook and his eyes glaze over. Sleepy-tight!





Are these the best animated boxers you've ever seen or what?

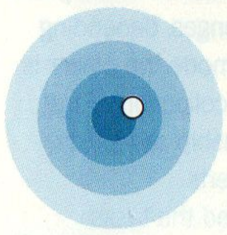


punch-drunk, creating an often unwieldy title contest. Thankfully a new control method should prevent this being a problem on the PS2. Instead, the all-new 'Dynamic Punch Control' method enables the player to create individual fighting styles. Now, as the large on-screen fighters move in to exchange body blows, it falls to the player to risk a sneaky uppercut or a jab to the chin. A secondary benefit is that the system also enables players to make the most of each fighter's key attributes, whether it be reach or stamina, and this means that the assorted boxer stats are useful for a change rather than just window dressing.

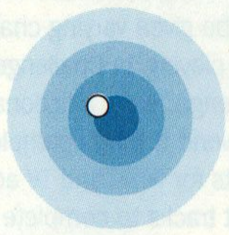
Other key alterations to *Knockout Kings 2001* include an enhanced training system that showcase the counter-punches, blocks and combinations that are possible, while the Career mode now features shyster promoters who are out to make a quick buck out of your talents. Basically, if it is to do with boxing, *Knockout Kings 2001* has it. On-screen referees, female boxers, expert commentary and a rather smart Haymaker knockout punch provide more effective KOs than a horseshoe in a boxing glove. *Ready 2 Rumble 2*'s oddball collection of sumo wrestlers and plastic-faced pop stars should start to worry, for the gaming equivalent of Mike Tyson is almost here. □

ON TARGET? KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001

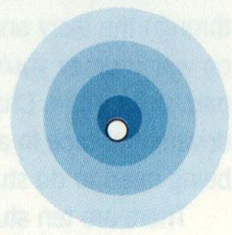
Slicker than Marvin Hagler, as brutal as a hungry Mike Tyson and as long-lasting as George Foreman. Frank Bruno need not apply...



GRAPHICS
Fighters move gracefully and punch land with realism.



GAMEPLAY
Punch combos are easy soon becoming second nature.

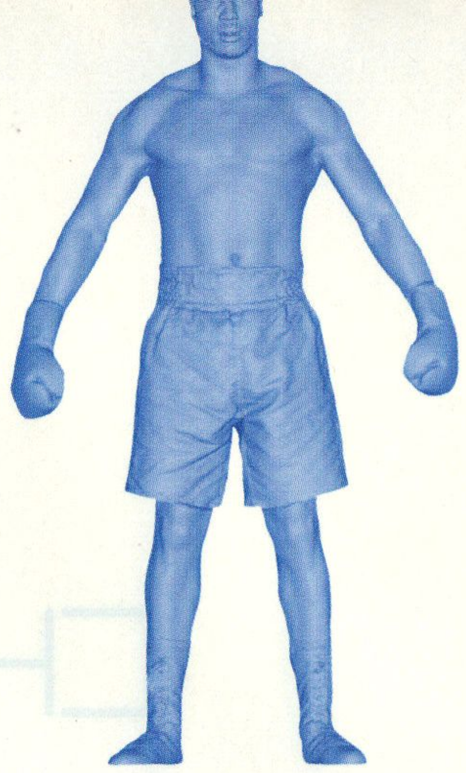


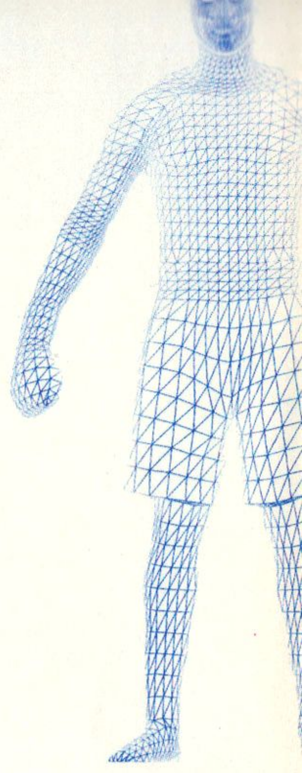
THE PAIN
Blood and teeth fly as heads are whipped back by quick jabs.

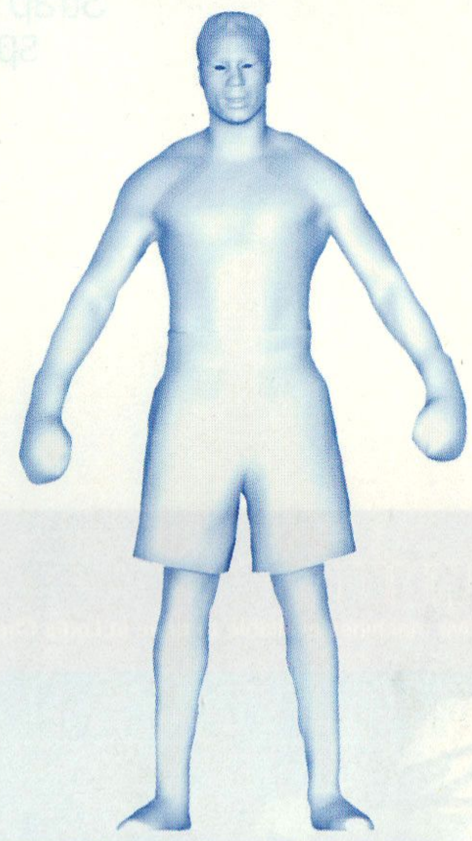
IN THE RED CORNER

***Knockout Kings* features over 50 boxers within its heavyweight, middleweight, lightweight and female categories, with classic fighters both past and present available. This is just the heavyweight list...**

- ☐ Muhammad Ali
- ☐ Frank Bruno
- ☐ Eric 'Butterball' Esch
- ☐ Jack Dempsey
- ☐ Joe Frazier
- ☐ Evander Holyfield
- ☐ Larry Holmes
- ☐ Michael Grant
- ☐ Ingemar Johannson
- ☐ Ashy Knucks
- ☐ Lennox Lewis
- ☐ Sonny Liston
- ☐ Joe Louis
- ☐ Rocky Marciano
- ☐ Archie More
- ☐ Ken Norton
- ☐ Floyd Patterson
- ☐ Earnie Shavers
- ☐ David Tua

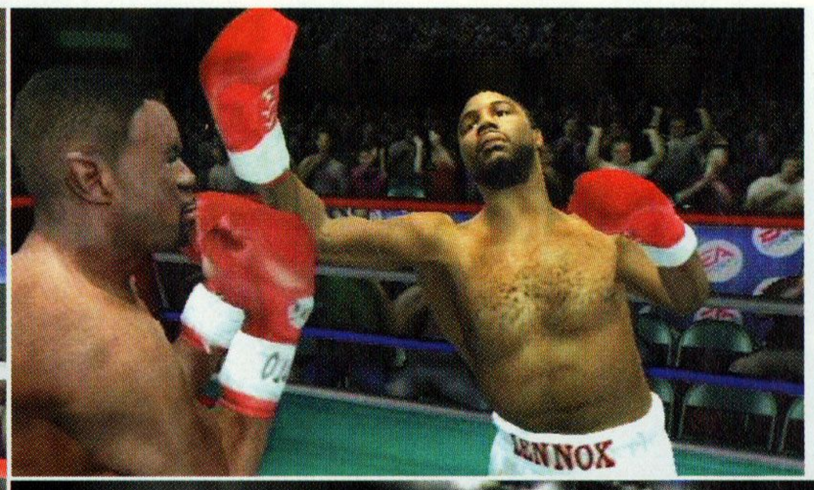










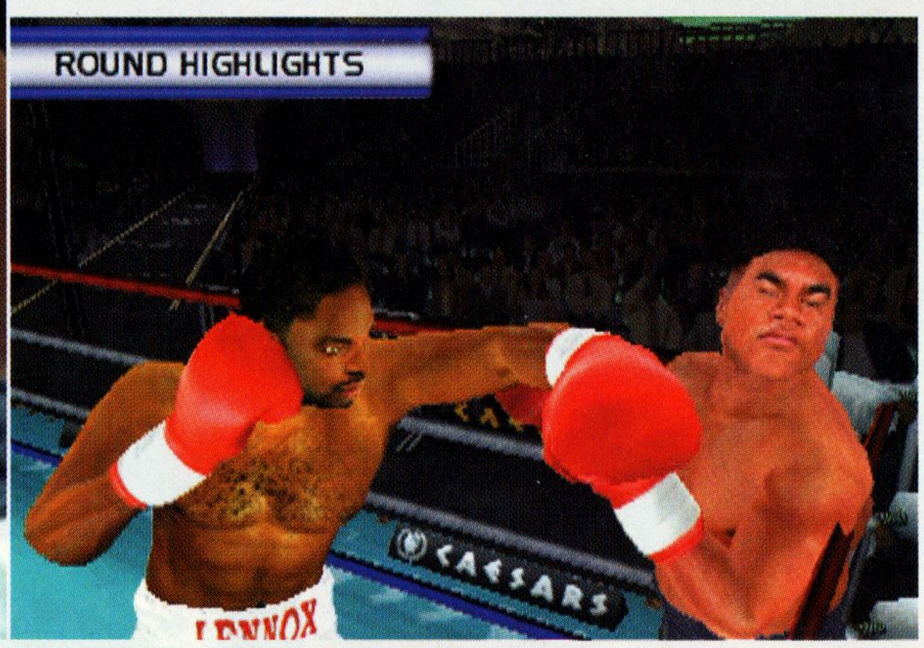




He's the heavyweight champion of the world. And you get to play him.



In a replay of his recent title fight, Lewis take on Tua and...



...jabs his face off for the best part of an evening.

WORDS: BEN LAWRENCE

LOTUS CHALLENGE

Strap yourself into some of the world's fastest sports cars and prepare to enter missions that would take Bond's breath away…

Publisher: Virgin
Developer: Kuju
Players: 1-4
Release: Summer 2001

Ever since the svelte, white Esprit was put through its paces by Roger Moore in *The Spy Who Loved Me*, Lotus – the quintessential English sports car – has been at the forefront of desirability and danger. If James Bond wasn't fitting his super-machine with exploding car alarms, he was driving it off jetties in an attempt to halt the spread of global terrorism. While few drivers will ever experience the sensation of plunging a mega-bucks motor into the depths of the briny, some will have sat behind the Lotus's low, sleek dashboard and licked at the leather interior (and even more will have wished they could have). Now, courtesy of Kuju Entertainment, everybody gets the chance to drive one of these wonder cars.

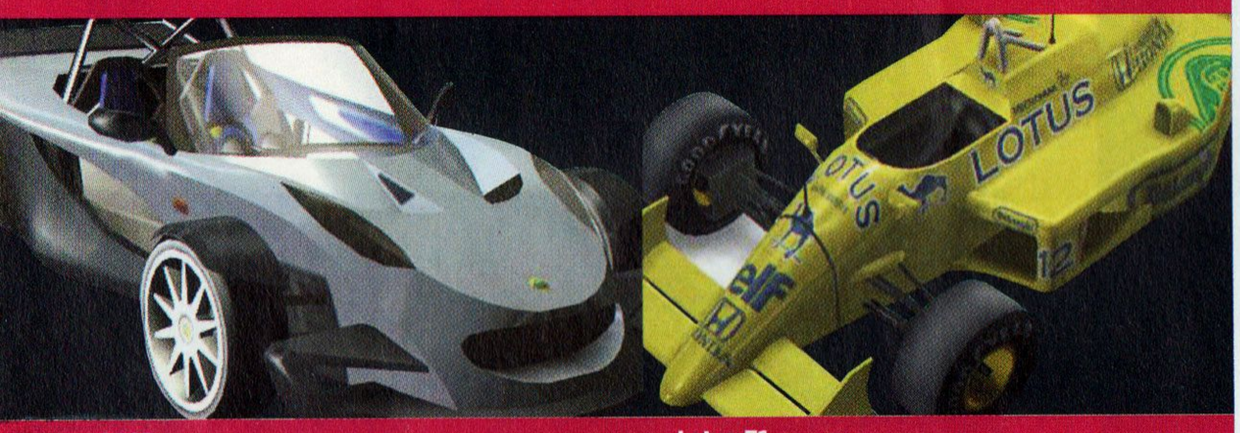
Lotus Challenge may not hold a light to the might of *Gran Turismo*, it may not even have the panache that *Ridge Racer* has acquired, but it hopes to make a huge dent in their credibility nonetheless. Featuring 40 Lotus cars and tracks spanning the globe, not only does the game involve racing against other computer-controlled drivers, it also adds driving challenges ranging from performing stunts on movie sets to trying to catch other cars while navigating in heavy traffic.

The stunts are part of the Challenge mode, involving a story in which the player can choose to control one of two different characters – one male one female – and enter cars into a variety of races. These characters will have different paths through the story and be given varying challenges, depending on which driver you're playing. In Challenge mode the player is part of the Lotus Challenge Team, a fictional collection of test drivers that race in a world driving championship as well as being hired to do stunts for films and TV adverts.

There are ten stunt tracks to complete and the tasks punctuate the 15 available race tracks and each requires mastery of varying degrees. You will be required to test your behind-the-wheel skills to the limit in a number of bizarre ways,

SHOWROOM

A selection of seductive machines available to drive in *Lotus Challenge*.



340R
It may look like a dune buggy, it may look like a kit car, but the 340R is Lotus's latest development and it drives like a dream.

Lotus F1
You'll have to be in control of this magnificent beast 100% of the time to stay alive. It's fast, dangerous and illegal for use on conventional roads.

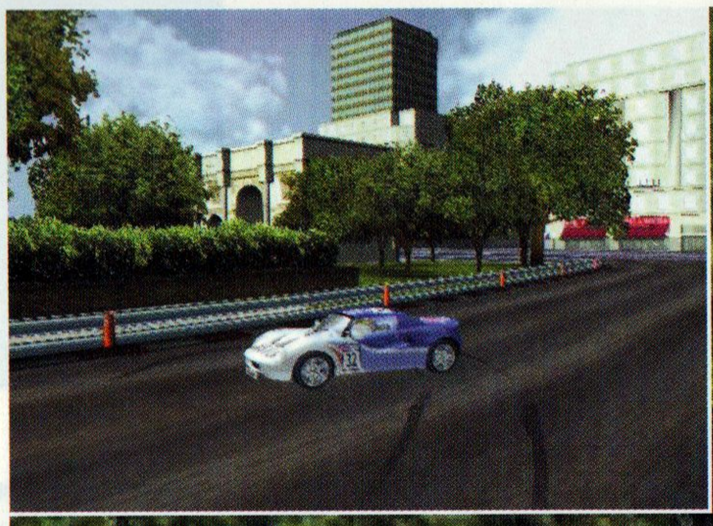


Elise
Cute as a button, this is your archetypal midget gem. Although it looks capable of being outrun by a Mini, it goes like a bullet and handles like it loves you.

Esprit
The chunky big brother of the Elise drives like a beast. Lotus test drivers did the stunts in *The Spy Who Loved Me* because the stuntmen couldn't handle it properly.



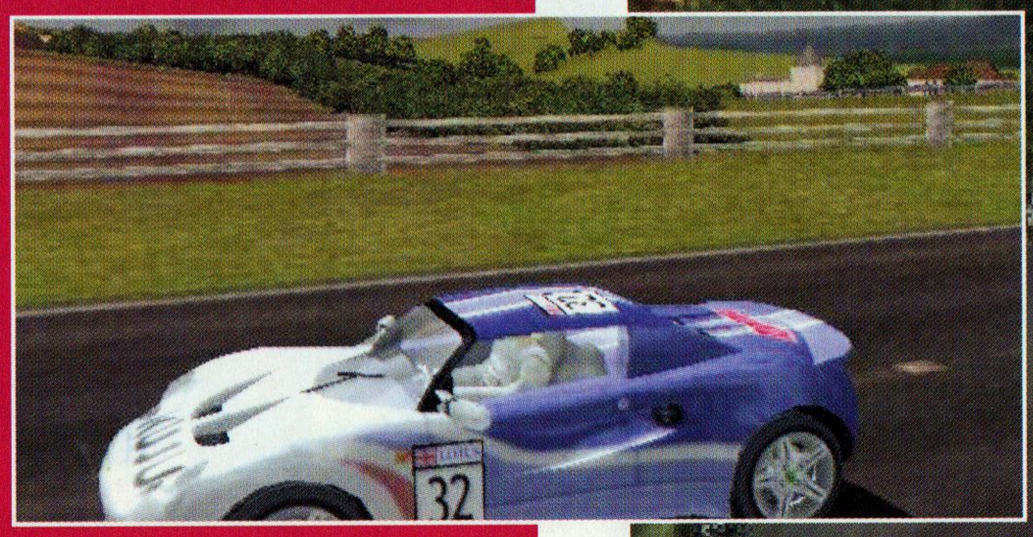
Lotus Carlton
It may look like a Vauxhall, but the Lotus Carlton, which hit the streets back in 1990, is still one of the fastest production saloon cars in the world.



Good job the road's empty – you do cause some serious high-speed accidents.



The Elise is one sexy car and she drives like an absolute kitten.





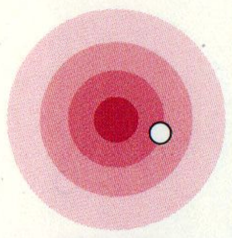
including emergency challenges such as rushing dying people to hospital. Cut-scenes will then reveal the story line and connect these odd challenges together.

Taking full advantage of the Lotus licence, each car model in the game has been precisely designed based on specifications straight from the manufacturer. Some of the most exciting cars in Lotus's history are featured, including future-concept models and Formula One cars as well as numerous classics such as the Esprit, Elise, Lotus 7 and the futuristic, dune-buggy-style 340R. Extensive co-operation with Lotus engineers has also enabled the development of a physics-based driving model, which players can use for racing and pulling off the most impressive stunts possible. Even the Lotus test drivers have been called upon to offer their opinion; one now refuses to come into work, preferring instead to spend the day wedged in front of the TV, Dual Shock in hand. Well, maybe.

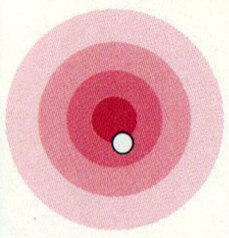
Although *Lotus Challenge* isn't due for release until the beginning of the summer 2001, it is already nudging itself to the forefront of people's attention. We'll be following its progress throughout and as soon as we get more information, you'll be guaranteed to hear about it. □

ON TARGET?
LOTUS CHALLENGE

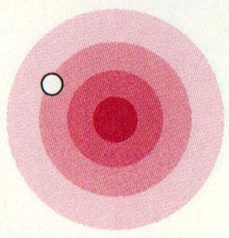
Bold and British with a few surprises thrown in for good measure. Sounds promising indeed.



COMPETITION
Hardly a contender to *GT3* or *RRV* but could do well.



STYLE
Full of Lotuses, contemporary and classic, it oozes class.

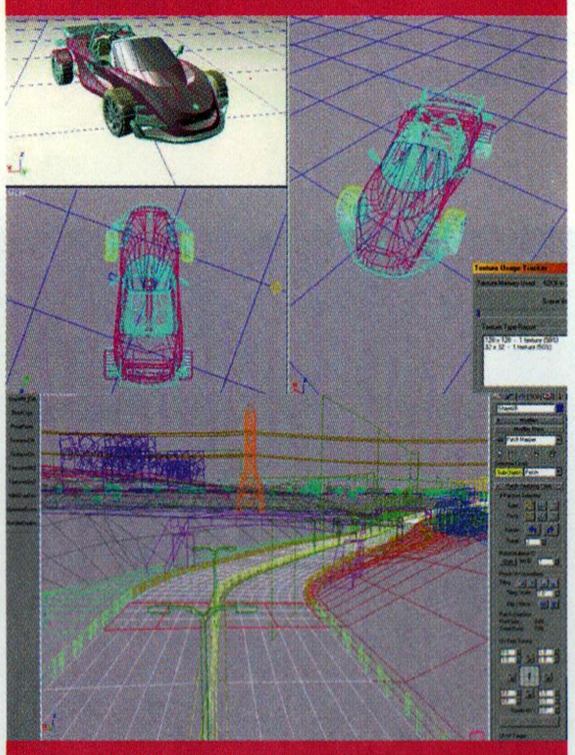


TRACKS
Will 15 be enough to please hardcore racing fans?

There will be nine F1 cars available to race in *Lotus Challenge*.



GENESIS
And on the eighth day, He/She created cars...

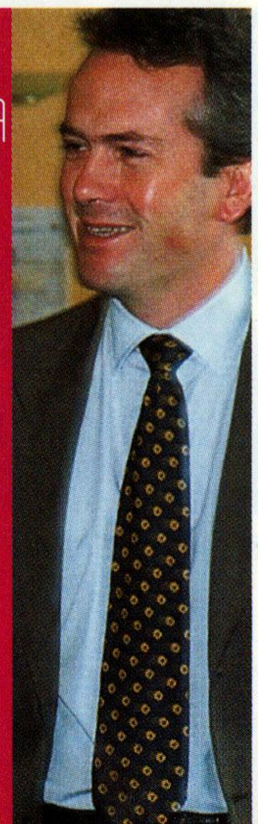


If you thought the job of building cars was a chore, look at the amount of detail required just to animate the frame of a Lotus. Remember, this has to be done in every dimension for all 40 cars. Then you have the task of building a track for them to race around... With over quarter of a million polygons per track, it's akin to constructing a submarine from matchsticks.

So British they even drive on the left-hand side. We can't ask for more than that, can we?

WINNING FORMULA
Keeping it in the family...

Even during its early stages of development, *Lotus Challenge* has attracted interest from the highest levels of the Lotus empire. During our recent press showing of the game Clive Chapman, head of Classic Team Lotus, turned up for a five-minute thrashing. He was useless at the game but we let him beat us anyway. Honestly.





Bond's old favourite makes a return minus Barbara Bach.

WORDS: BEN LAWRENCE

ROBOT WARLORDS

The rise of the robots continues with the announcement of this, the latest in a long line of highly destructive mech games.

Publisher: Midas Interactive
Developer: DaZZ
Players: 1-2
Release: March 2001

According to *Robot Warlords* in a little over a year things in Japan are going to change dramatically. The year 2002 will see Tokyo overrun by mechanical monsters, citizens will be running for their potentially short lives and the government will be on the brink of a cyber revolution. Hell, we believed that by 1999 Martin Landau would be living on the moon so it all sounds kosher to us.

Robot Warlords is a very well-armed and very volatile game of chess. As a government agent trying desperately to cap the threat of the mechanoid maniacs storming the Japanese capital you control a squad of four Bullets (mechs of the mild mannered, good guy variety). From the relative safety of your war room you must command the droids, move them into strategic positions throughout the city and then set them against the opposition ravaging downtown Tokyo. Bearing in mind that the AI of the CPU mechs is reportedly set to what could be described as 'very clever' this won't be easy.

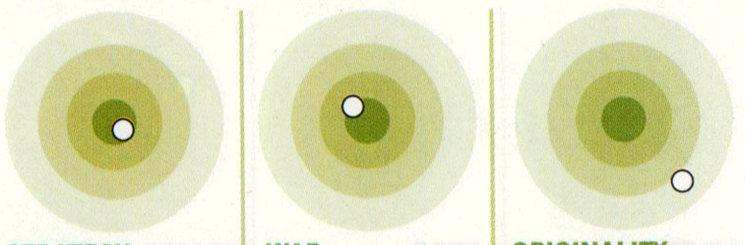
This game is more than just a turn-based beat-'em-up. You must ration out your moves within the city to appropriate droids, making sure that none of them becomes susceptible to attack. You must also pay close attention to the weapons you equip each of the robots with as each has its own merits and drawbacks. Should you choose to load your unit with an assortment of high-powered artillery not only will their retreat options be severely limited but if they sustain damage they could blow up through the amount of explosives affixed to them. Likewise, if you opt for a extra move options by choosing smaller weapons you are likely to pack less clout.

Once you have strategically placed your robots and used your allotted move options up then you set in motion the scenario. If you have orchestrated it correctly then your Bullets will do more damage than they receive. All this is viewed via FMV that actually alters depending on the decisions you have made. Every animation plays out exactly as you foresee, an idea that hasn't really been attempted to such an extent before. If you select a missile to whistle down the street and slam into a foe you'll see it happen for real. If you succeed in your mission you will then be able to upgrade your craft with greater armour capability plus the more important option of repositioning your craft within the playing field an option that adds longevity to the game and give tacticians something to aim for.

Although it is a far cry from in-depth strategy seen with the likes of the *Command & Conquer* games and more relevantly *Kessen*, it does offer a different slant on the mech angle that has proved so popular with PS2 developers. *Robot Warlords* should also find a few solid fans when it invades early next year. □

ON TARGET? ROBOT WARLORDS

A different approach to the whole mech thing happening at the moment that could prove very successful.



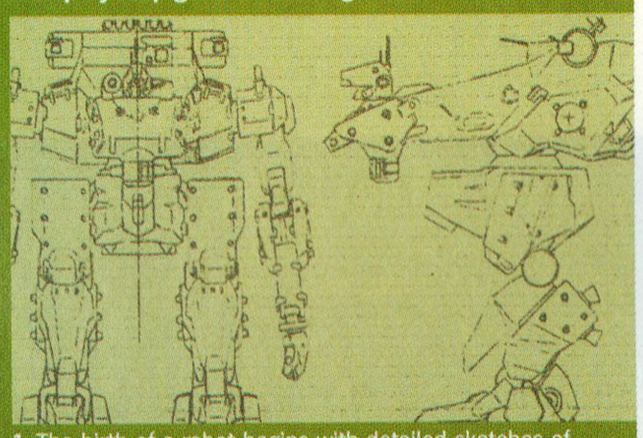
STRATEGY
Will require mind bending amounts of concentration.

WAR
Masses of guns, huge robots *and* Japan to smash up.

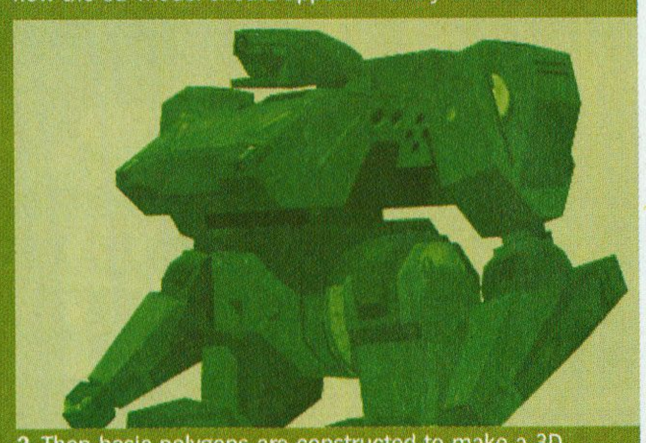
ORIGINALITY
With so many mech games will this be any different?

SCHEMATICS

A step-by-step guide to building mech.



1. The birth of a robot begins with detailed sketches of how the 3D model should appear in every dimension.



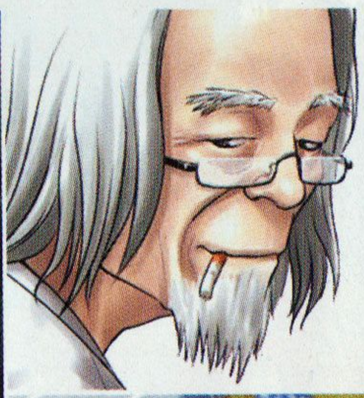
2. Then basic polygons are constructed to make a 3D model but it still looks a little like a Lego creation.



3. Once the model is approved it has paint effects added that turn it into a recognisable machine.



Tokyo in 2002. Gone are the people, in are the robots with the very big guns and bad attitudes.

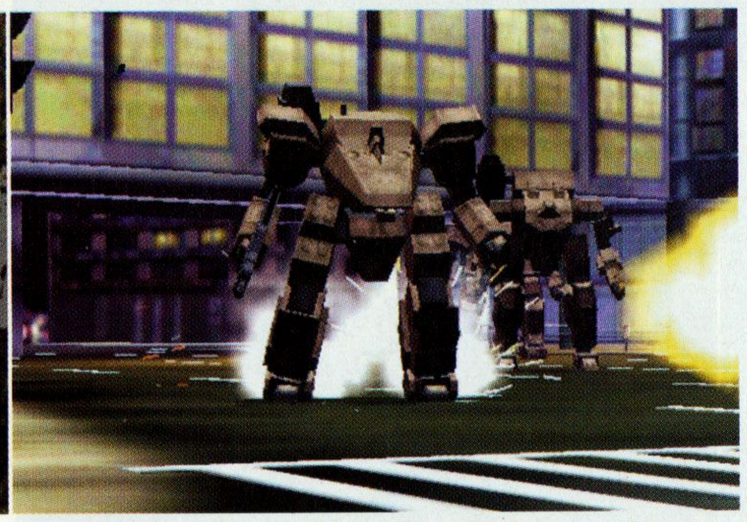




Street brutality mech style.



There are many places to hide your robot. Like bushes.



These guys could cut RoboCop like he was made of butter.

GRAPHICS

3D

SOUND

SPEAKERS

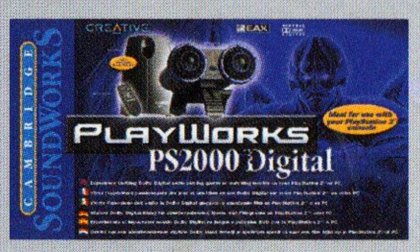
3D-AV

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WORDS: JON JORDAN/PHOTOGRAPHY: MARTIN BURTON

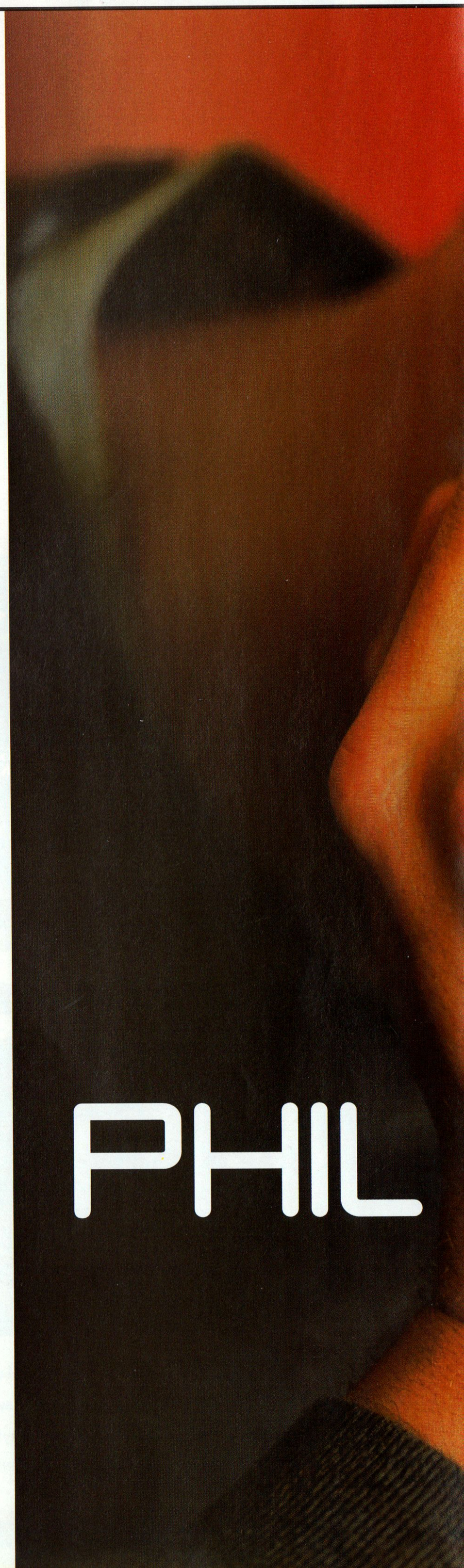
"We wanted PlayStation to become the Hoover of videogames. I always knew we were going to be the number one videogames system, I just didn't realise that videogames were going to get quite this big"

Considering he's only 30, Phil Harrison's position in the games industry is a great example of its explosive growth. The one-time bedroom coder, who went on to launch PSone in Europe, is now a senior vice president in charge of ensuring SCEE's in-house games really start pushing PlayStation 2's processing power.

Although generally recognised as the tallest man in the games industry, one of Phil Harrison's more provable claims is as Sony's first European employee. Back when PSone was just a rumour, Nintendo and Sega owned the living room. Sony wasn't even a contender. Eight years later, it's all so different.

A Sony man through and through, Harrison has played a significant part in the consumer electronic giant's rise to dominance. He set up Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE), launched PSone into what would become its biggest territory (29 million units to date in Europe) and then moved to America to become Sony's pointman within the games development community. And as the boss of SCEA's Research and Development team he also had input into the design of PlayStation 2. There's not much of Sony and the games industry he hasn't seen or done.

Still it could have been so different. When he set up his first consultancy company aged 16, he originally wanted to call it Leisure Software Design for the subversive acronym. Thankfully he thought better of it and swapped the 'Leisure' for 'Entertainment'. "I found some headed notepaper when I was moving," he says. "The name was in one of those Letraset fonts – one of those really nasty Eighties style sci-fi fonts that wasn't even nice in the Eighties."



HARRISON

SCEE's prodigal son has returned in order to oversee the development of in-house games such as *The Getaway* and *Dropship*.

Phil Harrison reflects on his decision to swap sunny San Francisco for not-so-sunny Soho.

"For a while I had every PSone game ever made in a big rack at home. Having a rack with 800 games in it is pretty cool"

PlayStation 2 is finally launched – is the hard work over?

It's just beginning. The games that came out with the system were written fairly conservatively in order to achieve a launch date rather than any technical evolution. The potential of the hardware is so varied that it's daunting to some developers but it's good from a consumer point of view because it means the games get better and better as time goes on.

When were you were first involved with PlayStation 2?

When I first got involved the project was really just a bunch of PowerPoint presentations – which amounted to creative targets rather than diagrams of chips. We recognised that there was a shift in the way game development was going in terms of more procedurally-generated content that required loads of floating point performance. The design also came from analysing PSone software. We had a really powerful tool on PSone, which was a performance analyser that allowed us to tune the games so we could optimise the system.

From a hardware engineering point of view it allowed us to see how data flowed around the system. That's the main reason why the bus architecture on the PlayStation 2 is so completely unique – because it's really been analysed to death.

SCEE'S KEY TITLES

TOP: *Formula One 2001* from Studio Liverpool.
MIDDLE: *Dropship* from Studio Camden.
BOTTOM: *The Getaway* from Team Soho.



How surprised were you about the power of PlayStation 2?
It was incredibly ambitious to the point that I didn't quite believe it. There was a certain amount of incredulity at the start but then again these were the same people who had created PSone, who had been thought to be slightly loony back then. It's just a question of predicting a curve in which you can reconcile a high specification with a cheap product.

How did you first get involved with Sony?
When I was hired I was the first European employee in the games department and the office was actually in the spare room of my house in Sussex. It was an inauspicious start. Sony Computer Entertainment didn't even exist. It was called Sony Electronic Publishing.

Prior to PSone, what did you think of Sony?
I remember reading an article saying that Sony was entering into the videogames market in the US and thinking, 'This is a company that has just acquired CBS records and has rebranded it Sony Music, has just bought Columbia TriStar movie studio and is calling it Sony Pictures, the next logical place to go is games.' It wasn't like I had a visionary plan, 'Oh I must work for Sony,' but I was intrigued. When I was asked to work for Sony I met the president of Sony Electronic Publishing at Heathrow at 7.00 in the morning and by 7.15 I had a job. It was very bizarre.

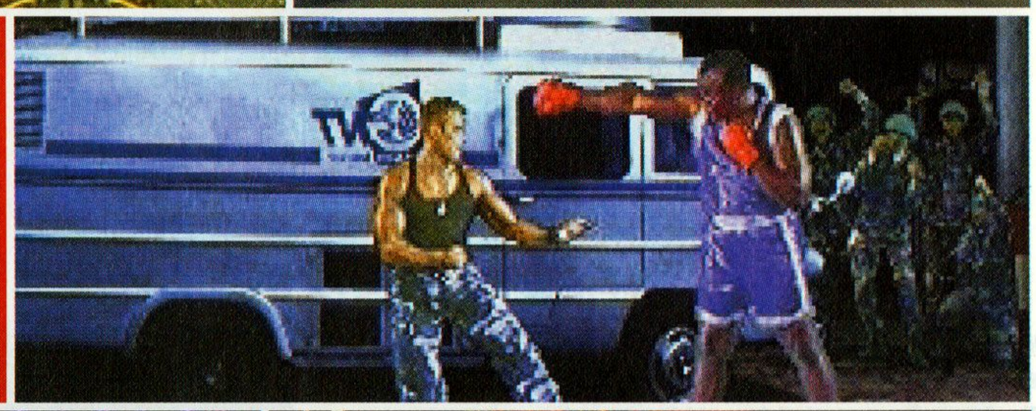
What was Sony doing in the games market back then?
At the time Sony was just a 16 bit Sega and Nintendo publisher, and to be honest not a very good one at that. We put out some pretty appaling games. I had heard of the problems between Nintendo and Sony when the companies were working jointly on the PlayStation prototype and there had always been rumours that Sony was going to do something on its own. That was the carrot for me. I met the people in Japan, we got on well and subsequently formed the European company Sony Computer Entertainment. It was a very interesting period of time.

After you joined Sony, how long was it before PSone became a reality?
I stumbled around for a year publishing these 16 bit Sega and Nintendo games. During this time we also acquired Psygnosis and I became involved in planning the business, which was a great learning experience for me but wasn't product development. It was more about business planning, attempting not to lose money publishing Nintendo 16 bit games, and we lost a lot.

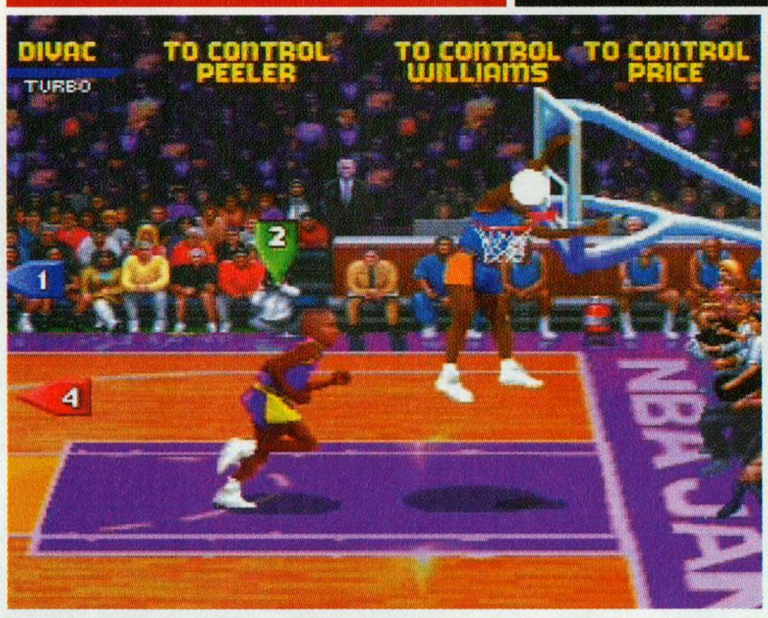
Of the early PSone games which impressed you the most?
That's an easy question to answer. I was in Japan before PSone's Japanese launch and we went to visit Namco to see *Tekken* running on the System 11 arcade board. No-one paid any attention to *Ridge Racer* running on PSone in the corner because they assumed I'd already seen it. I was mesmerised. *Ridge Racer* proved that the promise of 3D gaming could be delivered. I know that if you look at *Ridge Racer* today compared to *Gran Turismo 2* it looks like it was written for a different system but at the time it was an eye-opener. It was one of those heart-stopping moments where you go, "Oh, this is real, this is good."







STEP BACK IN TIME
Harrison once masterminded the PSone launch in Europe. The primitive feel of these games shows just how far Sony has come in the last five years. Clockwise from top left: *Rapid Reload, WipEout, Street Fighter: The Movie, Ridge Racer, NBA Jam: Tournament Edition.*





Were you surprised at the scale of success achieved by PSone?
I knew we had the best games system and I knew we had the best developers and I knew that when we launched back in 1995 that we had the best catalogue of any console in history. The thing that surprised me was the way PSone became part of the zeitgeist, particularly in the UK. It became part of people's lives in a way we could have only dreamed of. We wanted PSone to become the Hoover of videogames and in many ways it has, and that's an incredible thing to have achieved. I always knew we were going to be the number one videogames system, I just didn't realise that videogames were going to get quite this big. You also get blasé to the numbers. When we sold the first million units in Europe, the sense of achievement was amazing. But ten million didn't seem that big a deal.

Do you think PSone has changed the way games are made?
The biggest change was probably cultural. Games weren't just about 13-year-old boys in their bedrooms. It was about something much broader and so games had to be more ambitious content-wise. Now a game can have the same impact as a great piece of music or a great film.

After launching PSone in Europe, you moved to Sony Computer Entertainment America. How did that happen?
I was at ECTS [European Computer Trade Show] with Ken Kutaragi and we were sitting in a teeny meeting room that was about 150 degrees, eating dodgy sandwiches and feeling hung-over from some party the night before. I was having a 'where's it all going?' conversation with Kutaragi about his views on the future and he stopped me and said, "Do you want to go to Tokyo and work for us in Headquarters?" I was stumped. There's no way I would live in Tokyo, although I love visiting it, and I said to Ken, "Well that's very kind of you but I don't think I want to move to Tokyo." He said, "Good, because I want you to go to San Francisco." And to this day I don't know whether it was a bluff or if he made it up on the fly. I was in California two weeks later.

Do you think game development is more PC-orientated in the States?
I think that was true in the past but with PlayStation 2 a lot of developers are moving over from PC to PS2. Tim Sweeny at Epic Games [developer of *Unreal* and *Unreal Tournament*] is a convert now. He never wants to write on a PC again as far as I can tell.

You're now back in Europe. What's the challenge of the new job?
If you include quality assurance staff we have over 400 full-time employees in the development group. It's a much bigger organisation than I've had to deal with before. It's spread out geographically as well which is an interesting challenge. We've got studios in Soho, Camden, Cambridge, Leeds and Liverpool, so yes, it's a huge challenge and a good one.



Phil's ideal game would involve building a completely dynamic ecosystem. That should give you a sense of his ambition.

What's the best idea for a game that you've ever had?
The kind of games that I would like to build and play myself would involve some kind of procedurally-generated universe in which you could create a completely dynamic ecosystem. At a local level you could work between the creatures in a pond and then expand the web to include the creatures that are around the outside of the pond. Then you could randomly generate similar versions of those creatures in different ecological combinations in an infinite number of planets and they could breed and cross-breed. There's a game to be had there but you could also have fun just exploring and finding all those interesting and weird creatures.

What's a good Friday night for Phil Harrison?
An early drink with some guys from work then meet up with friends, dinner, out to a club, maybe live music. I'm also just as happy sat at home with the girlfriend and a nice bottle of wine.

Are you allowed to play games at home?
For a while I had every PSone game ever made in a big rack at home but when friends used to come round, they would just start playing games. It pissed me off so much after a while that I took them out of home and put them in the office. Now they are in a crate somewhere between the US and Europe but I'll put them in a big rack in my new office. Having a rack with 800 games in it is pretty cool.

"Games are about something broader now. They can have the same impact as a great piece of music or a film"

Where's your Third Place?
The Third Place is just escapism. Probably for me it's travel – going to foreign countries or visiting new cultures. I just spent a fantastic three and a half weeks backpacking in Thailand.

What's the future for PlayStation 2?
The next step is delivering on the technology promise with the next generation of games actually taking advantage of the procedural generation of content and the bus architecture in the way that the machine was designed to be used. Evolution Studio's *World Rally Championship 2001* is a good example. The future is about the deployment and the establishment of broadband as the new way of connecting with consumers. It's the new way for consumers to buy games and for players to experience games and share experiences with each other. Then there's video as a user interface device and the development of speech recognition technology…

Just how far into the future are you looking?
I had a conference with all of my development guys yesterday and it was good to set an agenda for where we want to be two years, five years, ten years from now. We've put a big stake in the ground a decade away. I'm not going to tell you what it is but it's an ambitious goal. This isn't just about leadership in the videogames industry any more, it's about leadership in the entertainment business full stop. □

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: **Philip Robert Harrison**
Nationality: **British**
Date of birth: **3/4/1970**
Birthplace: **Harpenden, Hertfordshire**

1985 **Started writing games while at school**
1987 **Founded Entertainment Software Design carrying out freelance game design for companies such as Orpheus, Probe, System 3, Vivid Image and Activision**
1989 **Head of Product Development, Mindscape**
1992 **Director, Product Development, Sony Electronic Publishing**
1993 **Director, Third-party Relations and Software Development, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe**
1995 **Communications Director for PlayStation's European launch**
1996 **Vice President, Third-party Relations and R&D, Sony Computer Entertainment America**
2000 **Senior Vice President, Development, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe**

Hobbies: **Music, mountain biking, cars, restaurants, fine wine**
Favourite movies: ***Blade Runner, Casablanca, Apocalypse Now, Star Wars, Charade***
Favourite games: ***Elite, Summer Games, R-Type, Mario Kart, Metal Gear Solid, Gran Turismo***
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20 years after it's cinema release "Clockwork Orange" finally gets released in the UK. Stanley Kubrick's most notorious film by far.

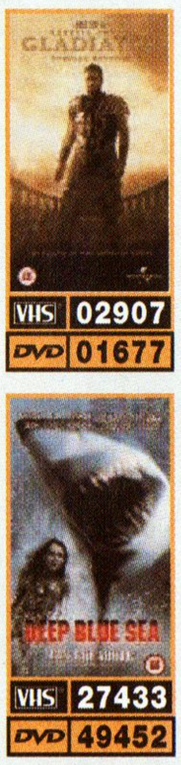
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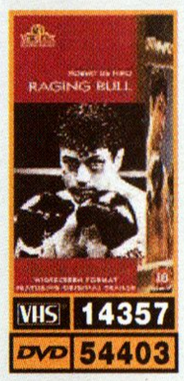
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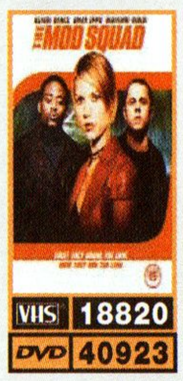
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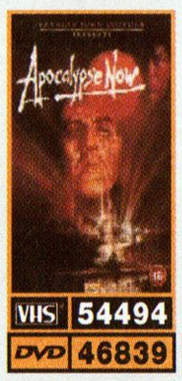
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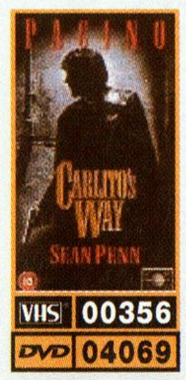
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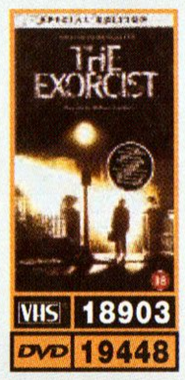
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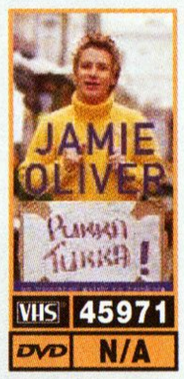
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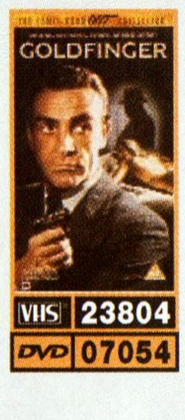
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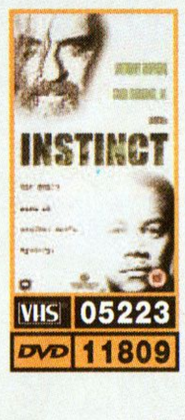
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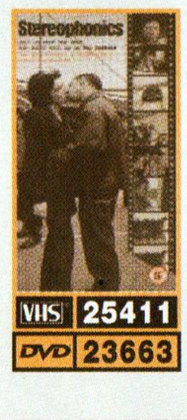
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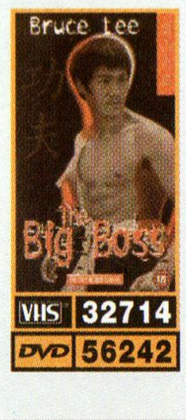
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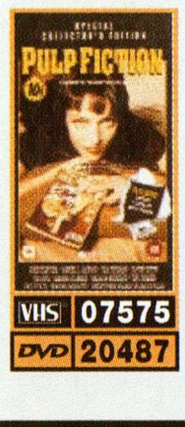
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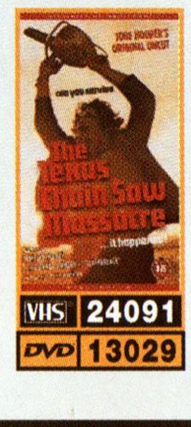
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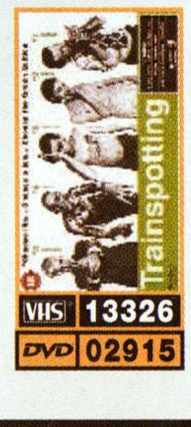


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Note: Due to circumstances beyond our control, contents of the demo disc are subject to change.

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PlayStation.2

SECRETS UNCOVERED EVERY MONTH

SPY

EDITED BY JAMIE SEFTON

headliners

UK PS2 launch report → p48
Valve's *Half-Life* confirmed → p50
New Japanese PlayStation 2 → p51
Star Wars Galaxies online → p52
DVD playback → p56
MTV Music Generator → p58
Rob Playford interview → p66



HORROR DOUBLE BILL

Capcom scare PS2 witless with *Devil May Cry* and *Resident Evil: Code Veronica*.

SHINJI MIKAMI, CREATOR of digital shivers with his *Dino Crisis* and *Resident Evil* projects, has suddenly jumped out of the shadows with two heart-stopping PlayStation 2 titles. Capcom is finally set to unleash the zombie-infested *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* and a brand new slice of gothic horror known as *Devil May Cry*.

Devil May Cry started life/death as a sequel to *Biohazard* (the Japanese name for the *Resident Evil* series) but Mikami soon began to twist and deform the game into an entirely separate PS2 creature. This awesome-looking action adventure stars a human/demon hybrid called Dante, who like his father Sparda 2000 years before, sets out to rid the world of supernatural foes and evil beings bent on apocalyptic destruction.

A sprinkling of screenshots and a Mikami-produced trailer released by Capcom show a game with incredibly rich production design. Medieval castles are strewn with battle-worn banners, broken crystal chandeliers, flickering torches casting eerie shadows and tall stained-glass windows depicting a history of past suffering and pain.

However, *Devil May Cry* isn't a game that'll involve the creeping terror of *Resident Evil* – this is a game packed with fast-moving, gun-pumping action sequences reminiscent of the vampire-killing B-Movie *From Dusk Till Dawn*. Dante has a number of weapons at his disposal, including a pair of lethal revolvers and a heavy, razor-sharp sword that'll hack through undead flesh like a hot knife through butter. It's



Hellish hero Dante dishes out a large slice of ancient demonic justice.

SPY



DEVIL MAY CRY: THE TRAILER

The following is a description of the spectacular new trailer from Capcom that shows a teasing glimpse of Shinji Mikami's new PS2 gothic horror action adventure.

[On-screen titles]

Capcom presents.

[Typical 'American movie trailer' voiceover artist reads the titles]

Titles: Two Millenniums ago there was a devil who fought for justice.

[Thunder and Lightning]

Titles: With the power of his sword he defended the humans from the dark raid.

And he became a legend.

[Silhouette of demon]

Titles: But now in our time they have risen.

[Shot of apparition tumbling out of a painting on a wall]

Titles: This time they mean business.

[Cackles from evil harridans, lurching beasts in an alleyway]

Titles: And another has stood up to wield his sword.

[Close-up of heavy sword on Dante's back]

Dante: A sword? Ha ha! Time to go to work guys…

[*Devil May Cry* logo]

Female voice: *Devil May Cry.*

[Action shots of Dante blasting monsters holding two guns]

Titles: Part human, part demon.

Dante: Even as a child I had power. There is demonic blood in me.

[More shooting, gymnastic-style leaping about]

Titles: He has the power of both worlds.

[Dante lunges at evil characters with his sword]

Female voice: What power…beyond my expectations?

[Dante lets loose with a serious round of bullets]

Titles: And it's personal.

[Dante shoots his gun and reloads in one smooth action]

Male voice: No… The legendary Sparda?!

Dante: You're right, but I'm his son Dante.

[Flying monster crashes through the castle roof and screeches at Dante]

Dante: Now, get ready for the power awakening.

[Dante rises up and transforms into a black creature with leathery wings and demonic eyes. He unleashes a powerful bolt of energy directed at the monster]

Dante: Sweet Dreams.

Credits: 2001 Summer

**Download the trailer at www5.capcom.co.jp/devil/index.html*



Zombie payback time in the atmospheric, blood-spattering *Resident Evil: Code Veronica-Complete.*





***Code Veronica* has a horde of undead nasties awaiting the three playable characters.**

an extremely flexible third-person 3D shooter that allows PS2 gamers to pull of amazing leaps and stunts, while simultaneously slashing a sword or firing gunshots in multiple directions. Also, as the character of Dante has demon blood coursing through his veins, players will be able to transform the hero into a winged hell-beast with powerful dark forces.

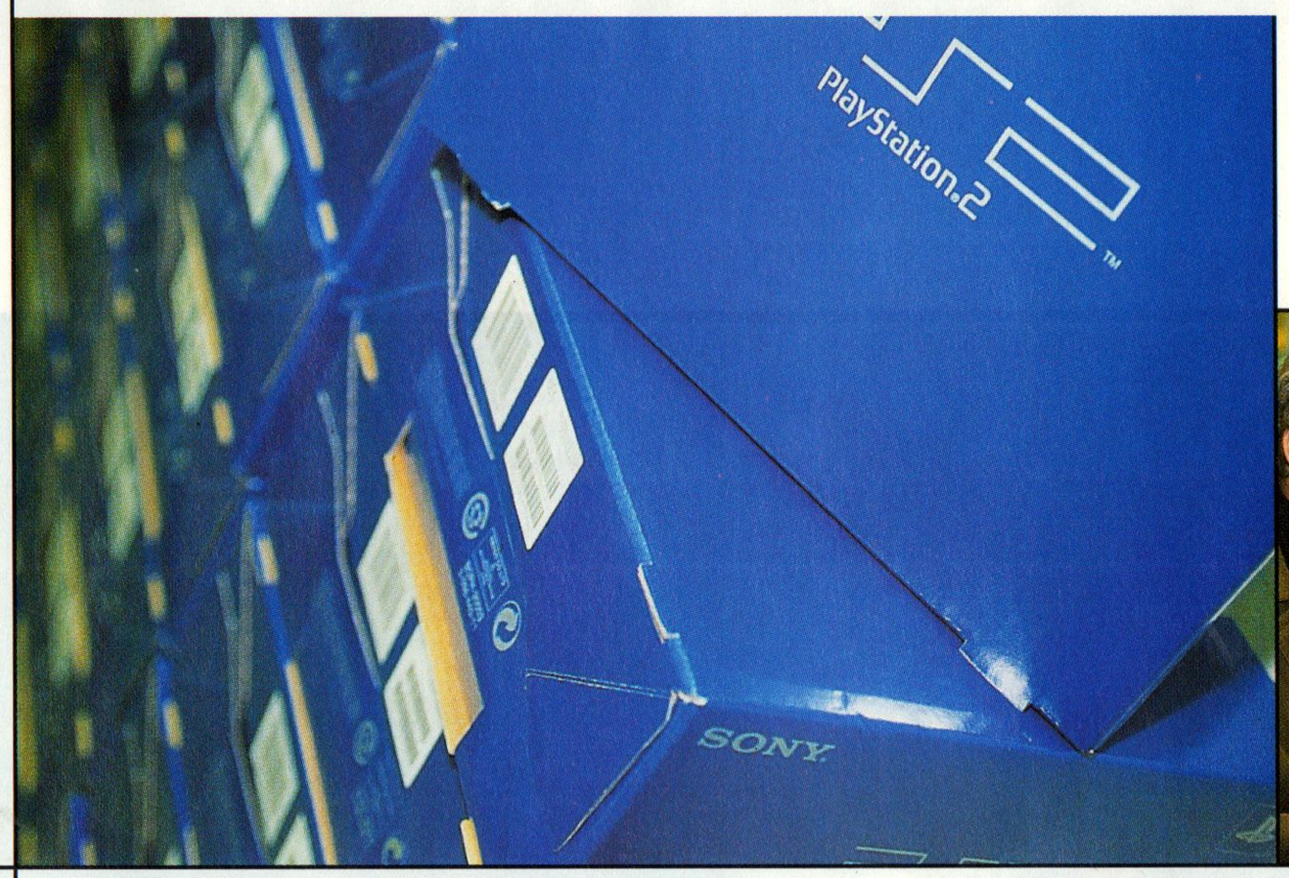
Dante is up against a hellish army of smoothly animated demon opponents, such as floating poltergeists with a nasty high-pitched laugh, skeletal gargoyles with scythes for hands and massive bird-like monsters that could crush a human being with one deft flick of a talon. Also including a foreboding soundtrack and some of the heaviest and most disturbing sound effects ever created for a games console, *Devil May Cry* could turn out to be Mikami's greatest and scariest adventure yet.

If that wasn't enough to keep PlayStation 2 owners trembling behind the sofa, Capcom's other videogame nasty, the notorious *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* is also stalking Sony's next generation machine.

Essentially *Resident Evil 4* in all but name, *Code Veronica* was first released on the Dreamcast back in the summer. Rumours regarding a PS2 conversion have dogged Capcom for months but it was generally regarded to be too awkward to port from Dreamcast to PlayStation 2. Obviously Capcom's desire to let a wider audience experience the sumptuous thrills of *Code Veronica* was stronger than any technical obstacle.

Code Veronica stars Claire Redfield – survivor of *Resident Evil 2* – as she is captured by Umbrella and imprisoned on a seemingly abandoned Atlantic island. Claire is soon joined by fellow castaway and series debutant Steve Burnside, while later in the game you also get to play as Claire's brother Chris. *Code Veronica* is much greater in scale than previous *Resi Evil* games, taking in gothic mansions, vast military bases and gore-splattered torture chambers. Puzzles are much improved and the undead foes are smarter and nastier than ever before.

The news just gets better – the PS2 version of *Code Veronica* will include additional story elements which Mikami and chums failed to cram into the Dreamcast adventure. The latest videos on Capcom's Japanese websites also suggest an expanded role for *Resident Evil* uber-villain Albert Wesker. The PS2 adventure will therefore be titled *Resident Evil: Code Veronica-Complete* and it's set for release in Japan on March 22nd 2001 – rather neatly the fifth anniversary of the *Biohazard* series. *OPS2* will be following this story closely and you can be sure the previews of these spectacular PlayStation 2 titles will be here first. □ **JS**




SCEE's man-at-the-top Chris Deering is grilled by Angry Sefton.

THE NEXT WAVE

SCEE want half-a-million PS2s in the UK by Easter.

AS THE UK ROLL-OUT for PlayStation 2 continues after a spectacular launch, *OPS2* spoke exclusively to Chris Deering, President of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE) who revealed his thoughts on the pre-order system, PS2 launch games and the company's plans to hopefully ensure off-the-shelf machines by early next year.

In the face of a barrage of criticism from mainstream media and consumers in the past months, Deering said he was mainly satisfied with the way the pre-order system had gone, "I think on balance, compared to any other way, it's probably been the best method. It's not been without its problems though. For example someone who wanted a PS2 and couldn't get up at midnight in September to obtain a pre-order form, might have found it difficult. Plus there are still people lined up in the standby lists who want one. Basically the sooner we can get into a situation when it's no longer required, the better."

So when is this going to happen? "Well it's really hard to say. We're hoping to get three million units out there in Europe by Easter, maybe 500,000 – 600,000 in the UK. We certainly sold that many PSones but not in such a short time. I imagine it'll be tight for the foreseeable future, but hopefully it won't be quite as crazy by the late spring, or summer when they'll be in more-or-less free supply." This echoes information given to *OPS2* by a SCEE insider who said that the company would be reviewing its PS2 distribution system in the new year and that they would be "following more traditional retail models." In other words, machines will go straight onto shop shelves.

But for now, Deering seems pretty happy with the way the PlayStation 2 has hit the UK, "Just to get where we are now is so exciting and such a relief. We're really surprised that were starting out with 17 games – 30 by Christmas. On PSone we had just seven games at launch."

Turn the page for the full story on the UK PS2 launch night. □ **JS**

HARD FACTS
The official launch sales figures. (24-25 November)

PS2 hardware
Unit sales: 69,347

PS2 Software
Unit sales: 99,142

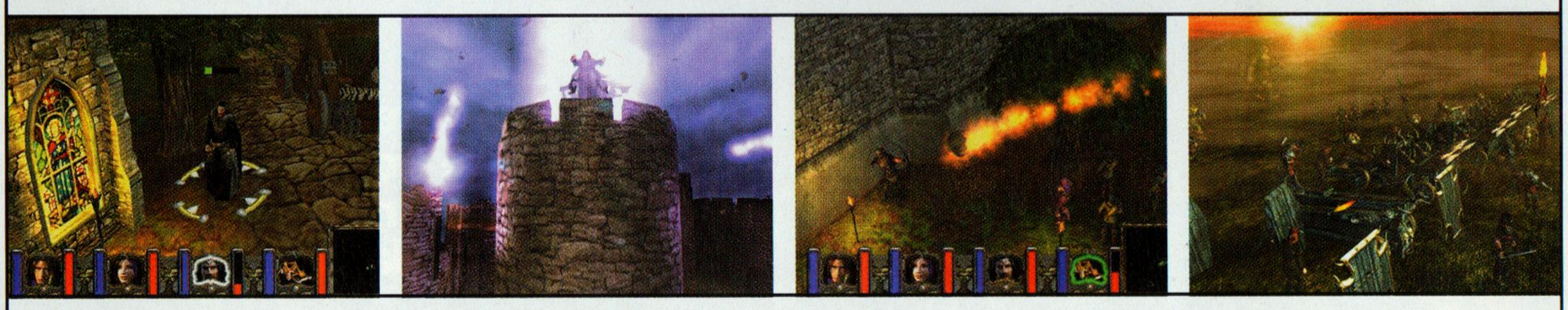
Software to Hardware Ratio:
1.42

**Both figures are upweighted from the ChartTrack sample to provide a national estimate.*



BLUELINES

Konami's *Silent Scope* sniper sim has a great bonus hidden inside – it's compatible with any USB mouse plugged into the PS2. Sadly, it makes the game way too easy. › ›Universal/ Konami's *Crash Bandicoot* is bouncing onto PlayStation 2 – check out next month's *OPS2* for more details. › ›SCEE has cancelled its publishing of PS2 fantasy game *Drakan*.



KNIGHT TIME

King Arthur returns in *Legion: Legend of Excalibur.*

ARTHURIAN LEGEND WILL rise again from the mist in spectacular style next year when US software stalwart Midway release their real-time strategy title, *Legion: Legend of Excalibur.* As a prominent arcade player Midway are famous for the accessibility of its games a feeling they translate to their console titles, whether they're ports of coin-op classics or stand alone games.

The hopes for *Legion* are high since one of the founders of the developer, 7 Studios is one Eric Yeo, principal designer behind the excellent *Command & Conquer* series. Using the legend of King Arthur merely as a spring board, the game aims to immerse the player in story-based action, such as being able to view real-time battles from the perspective of an army leader, in a way that mission-led *C&C* never could.

Producer of *Legion*, David Brooks says, "We've very carefully contrived, planned and designed this interface mechanism which allows you to have multiple units engaged in different types of activity, seige engines, hand-to-hand combat, catapults, long range weapons and archers."

The game is still in its early stages but images released show incredible graphical detail and if there is seamless fusion between an intuitive control system and sword wielding shenanigans, *Legion* could become a legend of the gaming kind. See next month's issue for a full feature on Midway and it's PS2 plans. □ **PF**

LIST

Five PSone sequels being developed for the PS2.

› ›Metal Gear Solid 2



OPS2 just can't stop banging on about this, can we? It's quite simply going to be the best game ever made of any genre for any console. Snake returns and the PS2's Emotion Engine has been used to its full potential to give him a Kajagoogoo mullet. And just think, it's only about 270 days away!
Hit, Miss or Maybe: Hit

››Silent Hill 2



More ghastly goings on involving asylums, mutant maniacs and fog. Lots of fog. A new cast are subjected to the horrors of small town America and a plot revolving around damned souls. With the PS2s capabilities the sequel should see a 100% increase in profit for Pampers no problem. We've witnessed a demo and it's very nasty indeed.
Hit, Miss or Maybe: Hit

› ›Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec



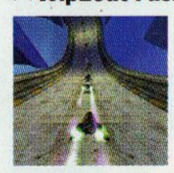
The best racing sim of all time tries its hand at the PS2. How will the collaboration work out? Like strawberries and cream of course. New cars, new tracks and looks that could make a grown man weep. Due out in less months than you've got fingers on your left hand, it should shoot to number one without a doubt.
Hit, Miss or Maybe: Hit

› ›Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2



Mmm... interesting. The original PSone game stirred up as much excitement as Anthea Turner's biography, so *OPS2* doubts the sequel will make much impact. You never know though, 3DO's plastic army may yet invade our collective gaming consciousness.
Hit, Miss or Maybe: Miss

› ›WipEout Fusion



The pioneering futuristic racer is coming to PS2, complete with awesome graphics and pumping techno soundtrack. However, the last incarnation of this thrilling arcade roller coaster ride inexplicably flopped on PSone – have gamers tired of the franchise? Only time will tell.
Hit, Miss or Maybe: Maybe

Five PSone games we don't want sequels to...

40 Winks Snoresome cutesy platformer with anaesthetised gameplay. If it comes to the PS2 jump out nearest window.

Pong And yep, this one stinks. No more 'updates' of retro games please.

London Racer Shocking. So awful we recommend you seek out a copy just for the hell of it. We don't want it on the PS2 however. God it makes you weep.

Wild Rapids White water rafting consisting of uphill rivers and gameplay that involves putting the joypad down, going to the pub and letting the game play itself.

Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling 3 If *BCPB3* ever showed its face on PS2, take a sledge hammer to the TV and don't stop until you go through the floor.

SPY

Mr Dirk Wild and his bought-in fans at Rage's suitably wild *Wild Wild Racing* launch party, held just around the corner from the EB launch event.

SCEE rented superclub Home's huge video screen for the launch week, showing regular updates, new PS2 footage and that final countdown...

Gamers got their hands on the new PS2 – and possibly a free drink or three...

//The French mini-riot made front page news but the real story was the UK launch.//

Lee Bottomley becomes the owner of the UK's first PlayStation 2.

Electronics Boutique spared every expense with their next gen banquet.

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARTIN BURTON

WHAT A FEELING, WHAT A NIGHT!

Wild, wild parties, massive videoscreens and midnight openings herald the UK arrival of PlayStation 2.

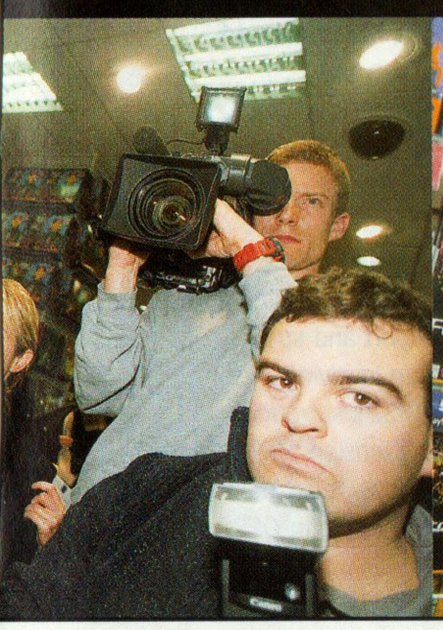
AT ONE MINUTE PAST midnight on 24 November, Lee Bottomley officially became the first person in the UK to get his hands on a PlayStation 2. The 28-year-old from Nottingham, who made his purchase at Electronics Boutique on Oxford Street in London could hardly contain his euphoria, "I've been looking forward to this moment since the beginning of the year and with all the hype and excitement, I just had to make sure I was here on the night."

According to the EB store, over a hundred of their pre-order customers turned up on the night to collect their consoles and with the BBC, Sky TV and a gaggle of journalists swarming round prospective PS2 owners, the UK launch turned into a genuine event. "I don't usually turn up at a shop at midnight," said customer John Hindmarch, 27. "My friends are waiting for me at home to bring the PS2 back." Another gamer queuing up in the early hours was 31-year-old Tony Burton. "I couldn't wait until the morning. I just want to get home now and play all these fantastic games." A quick poll of new PlayStation 2 owners saw *FIFA 2001*, *TimeSplitters* and *Tekken Tag Tournament* as the most popular additional purchases.

President of SCEE, Chris Deering and spoke to *OPS2*. "It's the culmination of thousands and thousands of people's hard work. PlayStation 2's great for Sony, but it's also great for the industry, because the UK is one of the driving forces of videogames in the creative area. Right now, this is a celebration for gamers." According to SCEE, 80,000 machines were shipped into the UK for the launch day with further shipments meaning that SCEE are confident that all gamers who have pre-ordered their machine will receive them by Christmas.

No such luck for the rest of Europe where France was the scene of much mayhem as a combination of no pre-order scheme and panic over limited supplies saw three gamers hospitalised in the crush for PlayStation 2 at the Fields-Elysees Virgin Megastore in Paris. The French mini-riot made front page news in the tabloids but the real story was the success of the UK launch. Vive la difference! ■ **JS**

1 Day to go...







President of SCEE, Chris Deering enjoys the festivities.





Half-Life's brutal AI has enemies falling back, then attacking in groups. Frightening.

HALF-LIFE: BETTER THAN REAL LIFE?

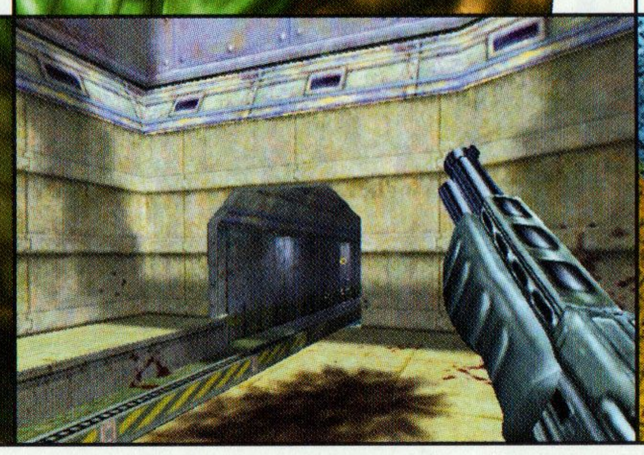
Valve's superlative first-person shooter confirmed for PS2.



Morality in *Half-Life*: Have a nice chat with the scientist or shoot him through the neck?









***HALF-LIFE*, THE STUNNING** 3D blaster that was first brought to the PC by developer Valve in 1998, will appear on PS2. Already scooping a veritable sackful of 'Best Game' awards and setting new standards in edge-of-your-seat gameplay, the PS2 version is being created by Gearbox Software who, with the blessing of Valve, programmed the equally well-received *Half-Life* PC expansion pack, *Opposing Force*.

Randy Pitchford, Director of Gearbox, is confident that the PS2 *Half-Life* will be "the greatest incarnation of the most important action game of our time," with improved characters, more detailed environments and new, single-player levels. There'll be even more inventive armaments to feature alongside the original game's arsenal, which included strange bio-weapons that spat out flying parasites, rocket launchers, revolvers and the infamous crowbar that can be used to force open doors, break glass and split open enemy heads like ripe canteloupes.

For any *OPS2* readers unfamiliar with *Half-Life*, you play the game from the point of view of a scientist called Gordon Freeman, who works in a top-secret underground complex known as the Black Mesa Research Facility. Unfortunately Gordon is witness to an experiment that goes badly wrong, wrenching a hole in space and time between Earth and a distant world populated by horrific and intelligent aliens. As you attempt to escape from the crumbling base, you encounter nightmarish creatures, Special Forces soldiers sent into the base to 'clean up', and stumble upon a sinister government conspiracy involving a shadowy 'Man with a Suitcase'.

Half-Life is very special. Although it's very much an adventure-on-rails, playing the game is like taking part in all your favourite action, sci-fi and horror films, with terrifying set-pieces such as the level where Gordon has to negotiate dark, claustrophobic tunnels that are teeming with scuttling killer Head Crabs. You genuinely feel immersed in a realistic environment, especially as it's populated with computer-controlled, non-player characters you are able to interact with – asking them to open security doors, for example, or help out in firefights.

Havas Interactive, the company that's publishing the game in the UK, has confirmed that in addition to the PC version, the PlayStation 2 *Half-Life* will also pack in multiplayer, split-screen options. *OPS2* believes these levels will include elements from the *Team Fortress* multiplayer PC add-on, where gamers can play co-operatively and take on the roles of different character classes, including a medic, soldier, demolitions expert and spy.

With awesome graphics, an involving storyline and possible use of PS2's surround sound for extra heart-stopping tension, *Half-Life* should be a must-buy game on its release in summer 2001. More *Half-Life* nuggets in *OPS2* next month. □ **JS**

REMADE IN JAPAN

New-ish PlayStation 2 launches in Japan.

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT has announced that it is to release a 'new' version of the PlayStation 2 in Japan. In response to the Japanese DVD movie market doubling in size, SCE are to release the SCPH-18000 (the original PlayStation 2 model was the SCPH-10000). This new model is virtually identical to the original version, except for some differences in terms of DVD playback.

☐ There is now no need for the Japanese PlayStation 2 to use Memory Card-based DVD drivers. Previously, PS2 owners who wanted to watch DVD movies were required to download DVD driver software from the Utility Disc bundled with their PS2 and save it to their Memory Card. The Memory Card then had to be inserted into the PlayStation 2 to allow DVDs to be played. This move brings the Japanese PlayStation 2 into line with the US and European models where the DVD drivers are already included 'in' the PlayStation 2. For this reason, the 8Mb Memory Card will no longer be included in the package – again, in line with the rest of the world.

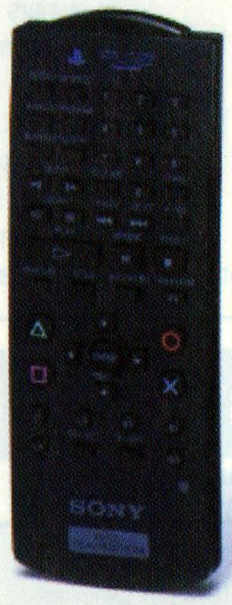
☐ The DVD playback of PlayStation 2 will be slightly improved as a result of using Version 2.01 of the DVD Player software, although as with the European PS2, it does not allow RGB playback of DVDs (see page 56). Japanese gamers can also expect new features such as Program Play, Shuffle, Repeat, Slow Motion, Scanning and A - B Repeat, plus it can now display the time of the movie playing.

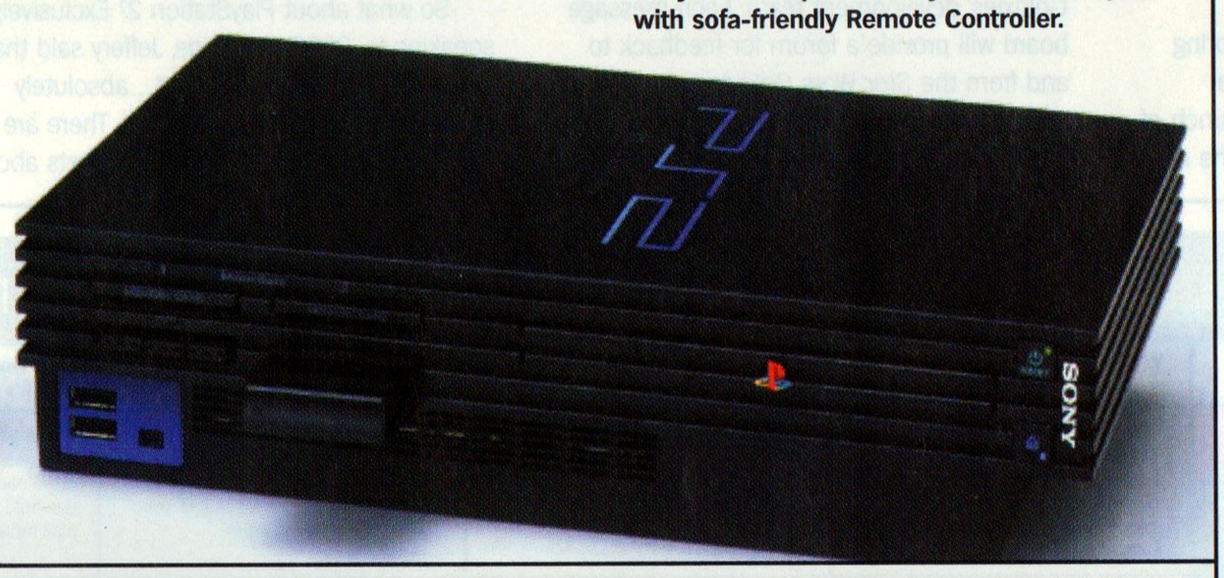
☐ To make use of the new DVD features, SCE will include a PS2 DVD Remote Controller and Infrared Sensor Kit (SCPH-10170) in with the PlayStation 2. Bizarrely, as this remote control has all the buttons from the Dual Shock 2 controller, you can even use it to play games.

☐ Owners of the original PlayStation 2 can buy the Remote Controller and Infrared Sensor Kit separately for ¥3,500 (approx £22). Released on 22 December, the Remote Controller will come bundled with a Utility Disc featuring the improved version 2.01 DVD Driver software.

☐ The new PlayStation 2 is launched on 8 December for ¥39,800 (approx £250) – the current price for a 'normal' PlayStation 2. Online rumours of a Japanese price drop have proved to be false.

At the moment, the 'new' PlayStation 2 will only be available in Japan, with 'undecided' being the official line regarding a European release. However, if the DVD market doubles in Europe as it did in Japan, *OPS2* expects an announcement in the New Year. ☐ **MG**





Sony's new Japanese PlayStation 2 complete with sofa-friendly Remote Controller.

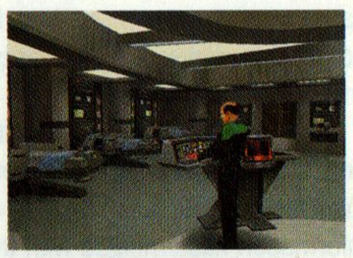
gallery

A choice collection of distant PS2 goodies.



WING OVER 3
Publisher: JVC
Release date: June 2001

Military and civilian planes take to the skies for huge cash rewards and a host of missions. Undulating terrain, real-time weather and cutting edge aircraft make this a potential corker.



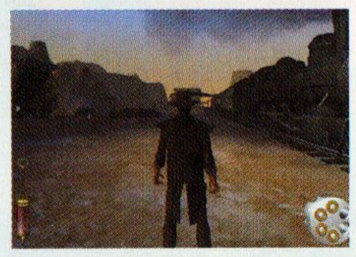
STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE
Publisher: TBC
Release date: November 2001

Set phasers to 'fun' as the PC first-person shooter originally developed by Raven, materialises on the PS2 courtesy of coder Pipe Dream.



HERDY GERDY
Publisher: Eidos
Release date: October 2001

Developed by the team behind the first *Tomb Raider* game, *Herdy Gerdy* is a tale of a boy (Gerdy) who enters an animal herding contest (hence the *Herdy* bit) to gain respect of her people.



GUNSLINGER
Publisher: Activision
Release date: November 2001

Get off your horse and drink from the trough that is the PS2. Play out all your cowboy fantasies in Activision's gun toting, Wild West shooter. Unfortunately it won't be bursting through any saloon doors until late 2001.

NEWS OF THE WORLD

THIS MONTH: ITALY

VIDEOGAMING ON A GLOBAL SCALE



Out of a population of 57 million Italians, over three million own a PSone and 85% are planning to buy a PS2.

After PSone's success, more than three million Italians own the console and awareness for videogames is at an all time high. Several companies have set up offices in Italy including SCEE, Havas and Take 2. PlayStation was placed 15th in a recent Italian survey about things that make life worthwhile – before football and after women. However, only 100,000 lucky punters will go home with a PS2 by Christmas at a price of L899,000 (£287), although some scrupulous shops were retailing units for L1.5million (£479) with a game. ☐

Italy's Most Wanted PlayStation 2 games

1. Gran Turismo 3
2. Tekken Tag Tournament
3. FIFA 2001
4. Metal Gear Solid 2
5. ISS
6. Ridge Racer V
7. Final Fantasy X
8. SSX
9. TimeSplitters
10. WipEout Fusion

Chart source: Ufficiale Playstation 2 Magazine/*December 2000*

FIVE AMAZING FACTS ABOUT THE ITALIAN BIG BROTHER

1. *Big Brother* is currently one of Italy's most successful TV shows, with over ten million people tuning in.

2. Five people are still remaining in the *Big Brother* house: three men, two women plus a dog. Don't.

3. The Pay-TV channel where people can watch it 24 hours a day censors sex scenes but not nude scenes.

4. A satirical show called *Never Say Big Brother* has been cancelled because it was believed to influence people's votes.

5. The house inhabitants have been reached with several messages from the outside. One of these implied that the microphones the men wear could make them sterile.



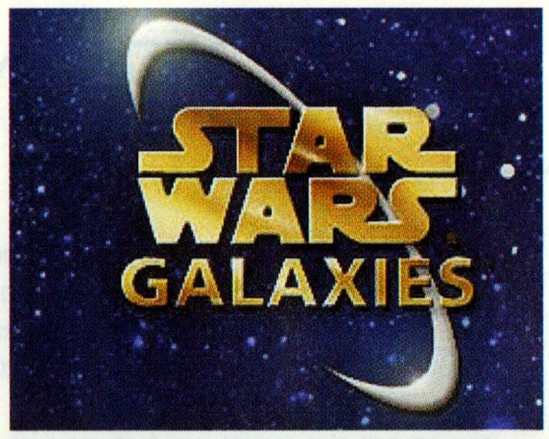
BLUELINES

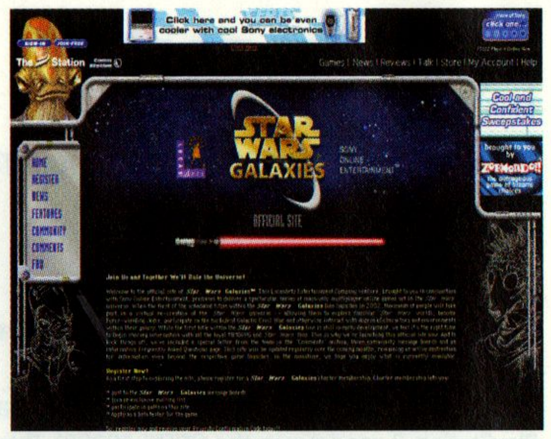
In Japan, Square's upcoming beat-'em-up/RPG *The Bouncer* will have a tie-in DVD single release featuring three songs from the game ››More Square news – the company has linked up with an incredibly popular publication in Japan called *Shounen Jump* to produce digitised manga comics for their PlayOnline games server ››Eidos's mature cartoon title *Fear Effect* is heading towards the PS2 after a spokesman at developer Kronos announced a third game was under construction...

SPY

GALAXY QUEST

Web site launched for PS2-friendly online RPG, *Star Wars Galaxies*.





VERANT INTERACTIVE, the Sony Pictures Entertainment-owned developer of massively-popular online RPG *EverQuest*, announced back in March that it would partner LucasArts and Sony Online Entertainment to create the 'first massively multiplayer *Star Wars* online RPG'. Based in 'the classic *Star Wars* universe', the game would involve a combination of combat, specialised assignments, and mission-based quests.

Following on from the recent announcement that Verant is set to bring *EverQuest* to PS2 (see page 57) more information has emerged with the launch of the official information Web site for the now-named RPG *Star Wars Galaxies* (www.starwarsgalaxies.com). Although in development for the PC it now seems this game could also find its way onto PS2.

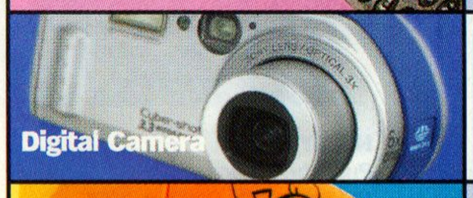
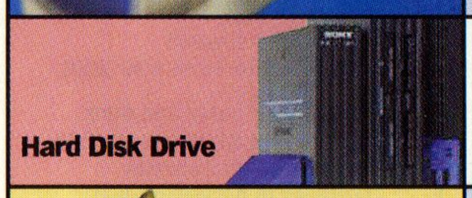
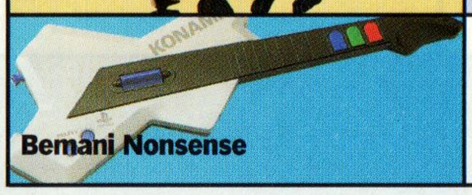
As stated, *Star Wars Galaxies* will be developed by Verant, distributed and sold at retail by LucasArts and available for play exclusively online at Sony Online Entertainment's The Station (www.station.sony.com). The Web site will feature three message boards, fielded by the *Galaxies'* development team. Each message board will provide a forum for feedback to and from the *Star Wars Galaxies'* team. The three boards are: a General Discussion Board (for game-related issues), a Developers Board (for game development queries) and a Role-Playing Board where people can discuss *Star Wars Galaxies* 'in character'.

"We see this Web site as an important step toward building a strong community for the *Star Wars Galaxies* line of games," commented Simon Jeffery, President of LucasArts. "We firmly believe that consistent and open communication with fans will be one of the keys to the success of the *Star Wars Galaxies* experience."

So what about PlayStation 2? Exclusively speaking to *OPS2 Magazine*, Jeffery said that online gaming for the PS2 is "...absolutely part of (LucasArts') business plan. There are still issues on the international markets about connectivity and it's an expensive business to be in. While we believe it's part of our future, we're just not saying it's going to happen next year or even the one after." He went on to say that the then-unnamed *Star Wars Galaxies* wasn't in LucasArts' immediate plans due to the fact that the PS2 connectivity issue is largely unresolved.

As owners of Verant, Sony is investing heavily in online-compatible play with the summer 2001 launch of its PS2 Hard Disk Drive/Ethernet package. Verant, meanwhile, plans to start testing the PC version of *Star Wars Galaxies* in late 2001. We'll bring you more developments from the Dark Side in the coming months. ☐ **MG**

THE GRID #03: So what add-ons could you be plugging into your PS2?

	What is it?	Where do I stick it in?	What will work with it after I stick it in?	What would I like it to do after it's been in for a while?	When can I expect to stick it in?
 Mobile phone	Handy device that cuts out the need to attach castors and very long extension cables to every pay phone in Britain thus allowing you total manoeuvrability whilst gassing about *EastEnders*. On the train.	The glory hole that goes under the secretive initials U, S and B.	WAP technology and games courtesy of middle man modem. Later models will also be able to upload images from digicams and WAP images from the Net. Then it's PS2 time.	Send/receive free SMS messages, send media to PS2 email accounts, download cheats, save games and patches, swap PS2 game levels plus play more advanced WAP games.	Just as soon as that modem becomes available – expect early versions this summer.
 Digital Camera	The modern Polaroid. Only with this you can use software to blur out people's faces. You can even get them in watch form nowadays for all those crafty voyeuristic shenanigans you might or might not get up to.	The i-Link port, Ideal for those 'gosh-I've-got-some-dodgy-photos-and-need-to-send-them-to-*The-Sport*-if-only-I-had-some-means-of-connecting-my-camera-to-my-PlayStation-2' moments.	A whole host of add-ons. The PopEgg printer for one. Snap a family photo, take the camera back home and print out the results. Far quicker than an hour in Boots for starters.	Record game trailers downloaded from the Net via a modem and capture screenshots of spectacular moves pulled off in *Tekken 4*.	Technically, summer 2001 although software available in Japan has been designed especially to create the PS2s very own photo suite. Expect a version on our shores in 2001.
 Mouse	A rubber ball imprisoned against it's will in a grey casing forced to do your bidding and take you anywhere on the Net or within your PlayStation 2 as you so desire.	The glory hole that goes under the secretive initials U, S and B. Hang on, we've done that one.	*Silent Scope* for one. Makes picking off those snipers much easier. More games will be using it soon, including such FPS thrillathons as *Unreal Tournament*.	Play all PC conversions and first person shoot-'em-ups, shop using the modem and surf the Net.	It's out now. Yes. Now. Sounds good don't it?
 Remote Control	The next step in confining us all to our homes plugged into the national grid watching DVDs. You no longer have to get up out of your ergonomic arm chair to control it, the PS2 will obey via infrared.	The Controller goes in your novelty Tazmanian Devil armchair remote control holder. The receiving end goes in the Memory Card slot.	Well, playing DVDs for a start but those PlayStation symbols on it means you could play games with it. Best wait for the promised infrared Dual Shocks.	Shop via the Net and control an AIBO from afar. "Here, boy! Go fetch Daddy's Red Stripe and slippers..."	Mmm. Difficult. Just announced in Japan along with a modified PS2 it could be some time before we see it. Let's see how the DVD market takes off.
 PopEgg Printer	Used for printing out images such as digital camera photos and art work via special PS2 software. Soon some games will incorporate this machine, so you can print out your most memorable (or rudest) moments.	The glory hole that goes under the secretive initials... You know.	For now you can make hard copies of your art (with *Print Hour*), your posed models (*Primal Image*) and your wet fish (*Lake Masters EX*). You can also print out real photos from a compatible digital camera.	It would be good to be able to print out images of your own lovely mug onto stickers or transfers, and how about making permanent copies of your favourite gaming moments as you play?	If Sony's plans for cross media connectivity on the PS2 go smoothly, expect the PopEgg and third-party printers to arrive in the UK before long.
 Hard Disk Drive	A very handy device with a large memory capacity for storing data. A small block in Japan, when it comes to the UK it will be as part of a HDD/Ethernet connector (modem) package.	See that whopping great hole in the back of PS2 to the left of the fan? the one coyly entitled 'Expansion Port'? Lift off the cover and that space is the place.	The combo of broadband modem and HDD will open up the ability to store downloadable levels, stats and even whole games from the Internet. Photos, movies and music could all be stored on it too.	Aside from storing the latest, downloaded blockbusting movie? How about saving your home's heating and lighting preferences so that you can access and adjust via modem from work?	SCEE's Director of Technology, Paul Holman says that next summer is on the cards, and he's the man in the know.
 Aibo	It is a 21st Century cat/dog/pet that can recognise your voice, respond to your touch, take pictures of its surroundings *and* express five emotions. And it won't go poo or wee in your slippers.	With a processor built around the Emotion Engine it won't be long before you'll be passing info between AIBO and your PS2. It has a Memory Stick slot which is a storage format that's coming to PS2.	The potential for AIBO pet management titles for PS2 is obvious, huge and likely when AIBO comes down in price.	Imagine a third generation AIBO with a USB port. It would be great to see crossover games where your AIBO's responses translate to an on-screen animal's progress through a story, or vice versa.	The second generation AIBO is available now in black, silver and gold. It was also available for free with last issue's *Tekken Tag* compo. End plug.
 Bemani Nonsense	The lunatic peripherals you need to play Konami's music and dance themed games like *Guitar Freaks*, *Keyboard Mania* and *Dance Dance Revolution*.	Drums, dance mat, electric guitar and maracas fit in PS2's Dual Shock 2 controller slots. Then you strum, bash, scratch, finger or generally prance all over them in time to the on screen prompts.	Bemani controllers work with such made-up Bemani games as *Woah Bongo Fury IX*, *Ooops! Trombone* and *Harpsichord Maybe YES!* They also make playing *SSX* interesting (and impossible.	*Concert Violinist*, where you have to keep up or the whole orchestra mucks up. Or what about *BuskFrenzy: Upturned Hat*? A game that gets you blowing into a Bemani harmonica for loose change. Then there's jazz...	Konami is gearing up a wave of Bemani games for PS2 in the form of *Beatmania* and *Dancing Stage* in 2001. These are confirmed for the UK but the other looks iffy. Do we hear a campaign starting?

SPY IN JAPAN

Edited by **Max Everingham**



FISHY BUSINESS

Tired of walking the dog and emptying cat litter? Then take a leaf out of the Japanese book and invest in a low-maintenance, aquatic robo-pet.

SO ONCE MORE your fish tank's inhabitants have gone belly up – but don't fret. Thanks to toy maker Takara, you'll never have to experience the guilt of neglecting your underwater friends again. Its robotic Aquaroid range promises to give you the same calming, therapeutic sensation that watching live fish induces – only without all the feeding and heating that goes along with maintaining exotic aqua life. All you need to do to keep them 'alive' is stick a light source above the tank for their solar-powered batteries. Or, for that added real-life authenticity, keep them by a sunny window so that they'll 'sleep' at night.

Two types of Aquaroid are available, the Fish and Jellyfish. The latter is easily the more eye-catching. With a semi-transparent biomechanical appearance, it could easily pass as a distant relative of the aliens from James Cameron's underwater epic, *The Abyss*. Under the lights, it emits a soothing phosphorescent glow as it floats near the water's surface. The Fish model has obviously been influenced by the Volvo school of design – boxy but good! Underneath its transparent blue- and red-tinted body and fin plates you can see the motorised innards as it makes its way around the tank at various depths. All that's missing is a trail of synthetic poo from its belly. Both robofish also have enough brains to change direction, should they butt up against a wall.

Aquaroid will be available in two sets, costing a whopping ¥100,000 (£632) for the top-of-the-range System 60, which includes both types of Aquaroid, and ¥50,000 yen (£316) for the smaller System 40. The sets include a tank, lights, one or two robots and, Lord knows why, a heater and filter. □ **AW**

30 DAYS IN TOKYO

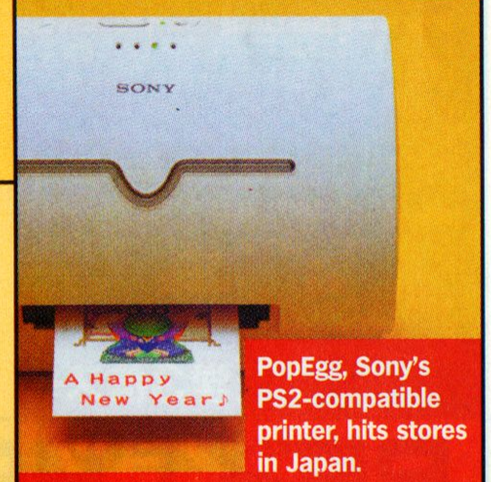
A MONTH IN THE LIFE OF *OPS2*'S MAN IN JAPAN, MAX EVERINGHAM

Day 1 (6 November): Seems *Moto GP* isn't exactly selling well over here. A motorbike racer is never going to be huge news, I suppose, but I'm betting the twitchy handling has a lot to do with it too. Could explain my frosty reception from the store guy last month. Resolve to have my revenge.

Day 3: That *Madden 2001* game – dead good, but for the love of John Elway, get rid of the eponymous announcer. He's crap. CRAP, I SAY!

Day 8: Legged it to the local magazine store today to grab a copy of *The PlayStation* mag. One of the Japanese gaming Web sites said it was running a series of *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec* special features... It was, but only a double-page spread and nothing I haven't seen before. AMATEURS!

Day 14: PopEgg printer and software out today, but I can't find one anywhere. Crack search party duly dispatched to Akihabara to locate this much-sought-after beast.



PopEgg, Sony's PS2-compatible printer, hits stores in Japan.

Day 15: Job done. One PopEgg printer secured for the princely sum of ¥15,000 (£96). The LAOX store in Akihab had just one solitary unit left and my fellas seized it – only for Richards-san to demand it be FedEx-ed to the UK for a 'feature'. "For the good of the magazine, Max," he lied.

Day 20: (20 Nov) It's getting a bit nippy here in Japan, and where I live it snows in the winter, so I'll be feeling right at home with *ESPN Winter X-Games Snowboarding* from Konami, out on 30 November. The same day sees the arrival of that bonkers *Unison* game. Seen the strange commercials. Think I've seen enough.

Day 24: You know method actors like De Niro? Well, I'm a method gamer and I reckon if I'm going to get really expert at *SSX* and *ESPN*, I'll have to dress the part. Look, it's quiet here.

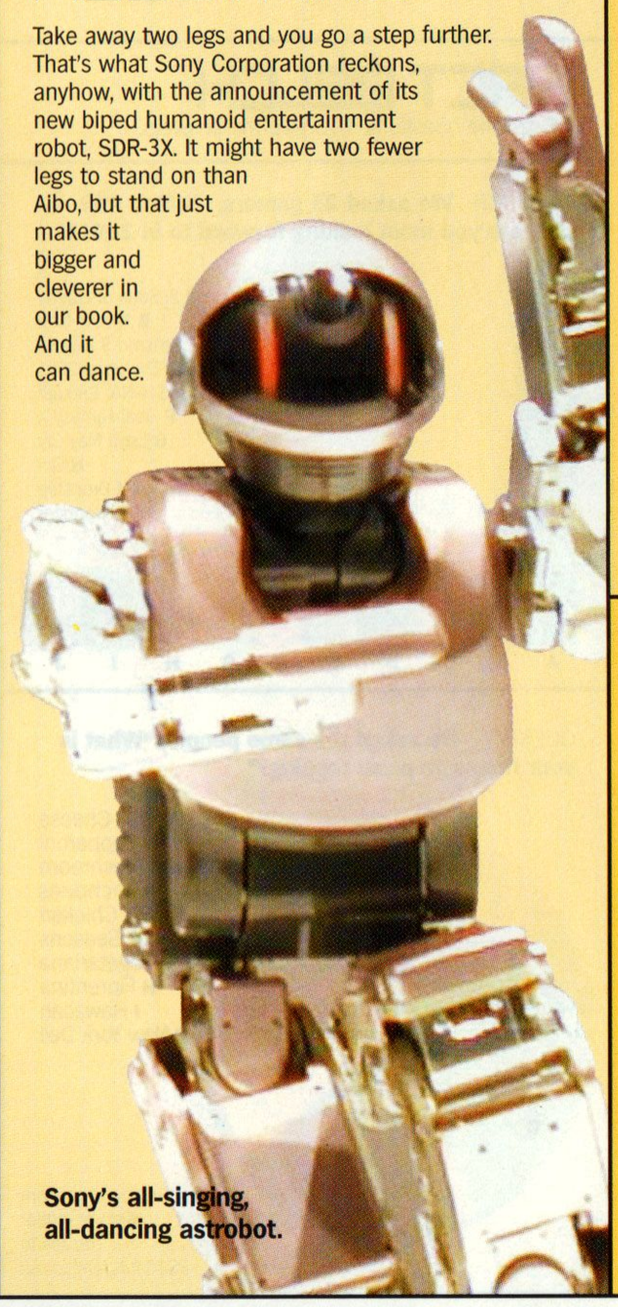


Day 28: National holiday today, so everything's closed and I'm bored stiff. Anyone fancy a go on *Madden*? Please?

SONY GADGET

ONE STEP FOR ROBOTKIND

Take away two legs and you go a step further. That's what Sony Corporation reckons, anyhow, with the announcement of its new biped humanoid entertainment robot, SDR-3X. It might have two fewer legs to stand on than Aibo, but that just makes it bigger and cleverer in our book. And it can dance.



Sony's all-singing, all-dancing astrobot.

GAME PREVIEW



MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM

Being the first incarnation of the *Mobile Suit Gundam* franchise on PS2, Japanese mech fans were scrabbling for a chance to get a go on demo units set up recently in a basement in Akihabara. The game features strong story-led, 3D mech-fighting action interspersed with anime-quality CG, and this time players will get to pilot the new-style RX-78 Gundam – which, if you're a fan, is a *very* big deal.

BIG GAME!

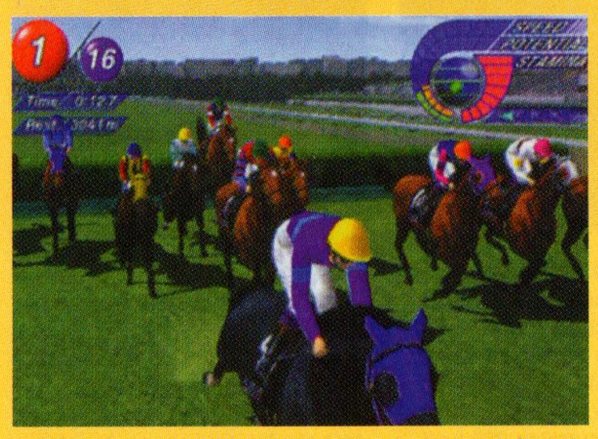


LEGS AKIMBO

According to the charts this month, it seems the Japanese like a good game in which they can give their legs a good stretch out. Legs astride in *G1 Jockey*, *Winning Post* and *Moto GP*, and legs all over the shop in *SSX*. Horse racing heads the PS2 charts and, incredibly, makes no less than three appearances in the Top 10. The *Winning Post 4/G1 Jockey 2* double-whammy is obviously appealing to the gamblers among us and it's golden days again for Koei, which is responsible for half the entrants.

PS2 CHARTS

JAPANESE TOP 10



Beaten by a nose: horse-racing sim *G1 Jockey 2* is the current PS2 favourite in Japan.

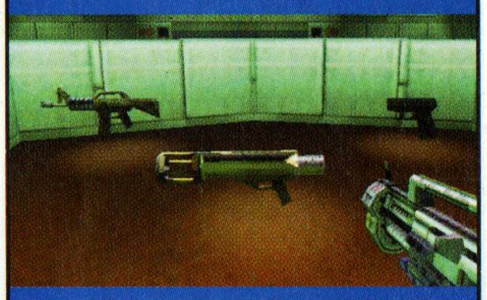
1. **G1 JOCKEY 2** (Koei)
2. **MOTO GP** (Namco)
3. **DANCE SUMMIT 2001** (Enix)
4. **EXTREME RACING SSX** (EA/Square)
5. **GEKIKUKAN PRO-BASEBALL** (Square)
6. **SHIN SANGOKU MUSOU** (Koei)
7. **SUPER VALUE SET WINNING POST 4 MAXIMUM & G1 JOCKEY 2** (Koei)
8. **WORLD SOCCER JIKKYO WINNING ELEVEN 2000** (Konami)
9. **WINNING POST 4 MAXIMUM** (Koei)
10. **SANGOKUSHI VII** (Koei)

Chart source: *Weekly Famitsu* (8/12/2000)

SPY

INVENTORY

Your one-stop guide to the PS2 power-ups.



#03: AMMO

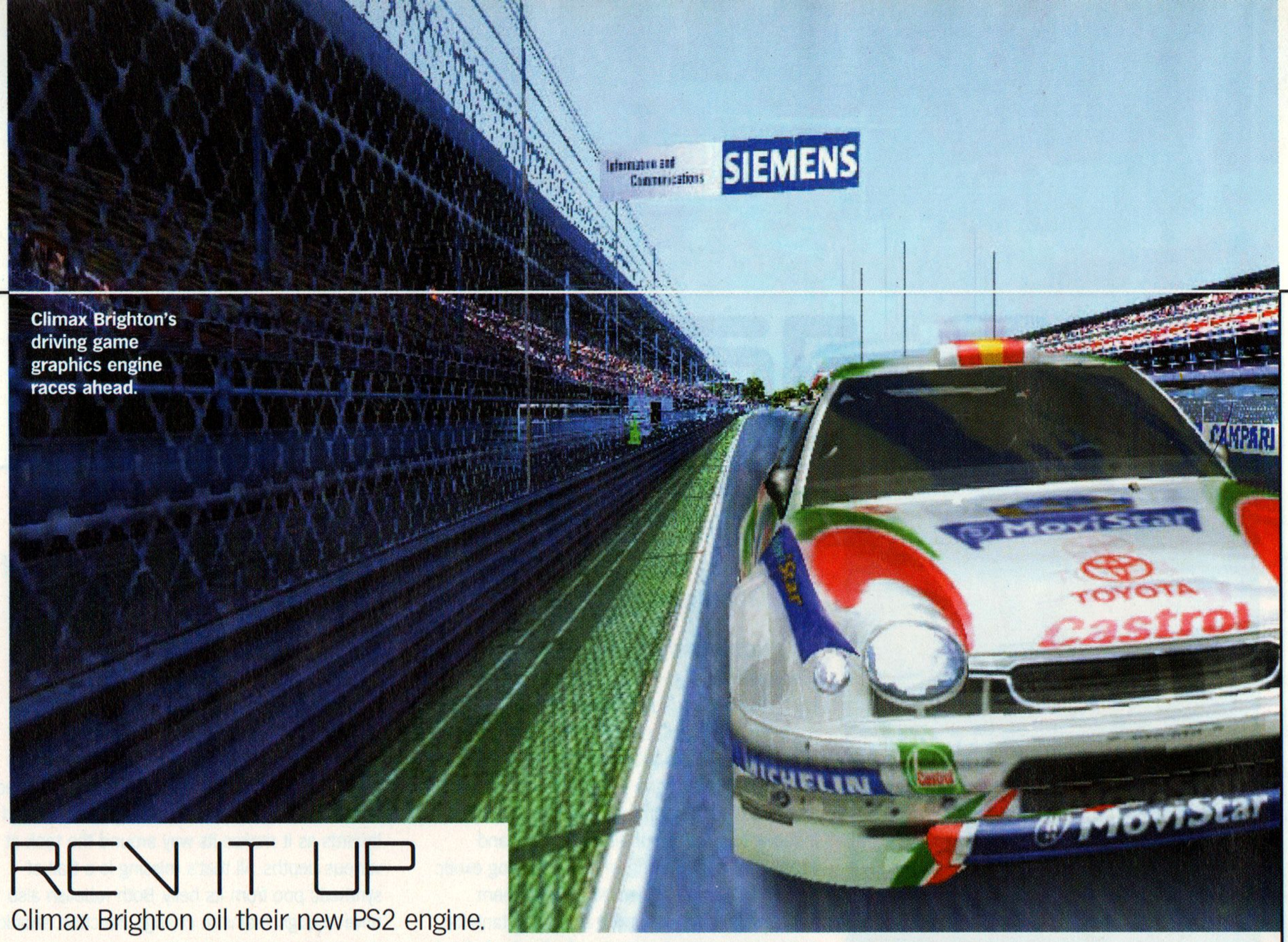
So what's ammo then?
It's ammunition, you dunce. It's the deathblood of any game that involves much killing and much guns.

So why didn't you just say bullets?
Not so fast. Bullets may have cut it in *Wolfenstein* but today's ammo covers everything from freeze gun energy cells (*Duke Nukem*), through nails (*Quake*), to the awesome destruction of *Unreal Tournament*'s Redeemer missile. Yow.

Hmmm. What does ammo look like?
Serious-looking crates are popular. So are gun magazines. Basically if it doesn't look like something you could eat or wrap around a gaping wound it's probably ammo.

Why is it a good thing?
It avoids that horrible, distressing feeling when you run out of firepower and you're humiliatingly reduced to punching your enemy's fists with your bare and bleeding face.

Where can I find some?
Always at the start of a level in 'more than you can carry' quantities. Never in the middle of a level when you and your spent weapon are being chased by 38 'borgs and a scabby dog.



Climax Brighton's driving game graphics engine races ahead.

REV IT UP

Climax Brighton oil their new PS2 engine.

IF YOU THOUGHT that PlayStation 2 was difficult to program – think again. Climax Brighton (EA's *Superbike 2000*, PSone) has just unveiled new graphics middleware for driving games exceeding even Sony's expectations.

The 'Motorsports engine' apparently delivers performance levels that are approximately double what was suggested in the official PlayStation 2 developer documentation. For gamers, this means better textures for track and car graphics, in excess of 20 vehicles on screen at any time, heat haze, motion blur and smooth curved surfaces, with no slow-down.

"Basically, we've invested large sums of money in our tools and technology so games publishers can deliver top quality, exciting racing and driving titles on a massively accelerated timeline," commented Climax MD Tony Beckwith.

The team has also created libraries that can simulate absolutely any wheeled vehicle on the planet, including bikes, cars and monster trucks. The engine will have the flexibility to adapt the engine for a variety of game formats such as rally driving, free-roaming city-based chases and Formula One racing. "We're talking to about ten different companies about our vehicle libraries at the moment and also four big name publishers that have Triple A Motorsports licenses to apply to our engine," says Beckwith.

As well as providing for other companies, Climax Brighton is confident that with the help of its new software, the team can develop a scorching driving game themselves within 12 months. If the Motorsports engine plays as well as it looks in these stunning screenshots, PS2 gamers should be in for something of a Yuletide 2001 treat. ☐ **JS**

**For more information check out: www.climax.co.uk*

PS2 CHARTS

The movers and shakers in the UK PlayStation 2 Top 10.



	TITLE	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER
1.	**TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT**	Namco	SCEE
2.	**TIMESPLITTERS**	Free Radical Design	Eidos
3.	**SSX**	EA Sports	EA Sports Big
4.	**FIFA 2001**	EA Sports	EA Sports
5.	**RIDGE RACER V**	Namco	SCEE
6.	**SILENT SCOPE**	KCE Studios	Konami
7.	**ISS**	KCEO	Konami
8.	**SMUGGLER'S RUN**	Angel Studios	Rockstar
9.	**READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2**	Midway	Midway
10.	**ORPHEN: SCION OF SORCERY**	Shade Inc	Activision

**Charts © ELSPA/Compiled By Chart-Track (w/e 25/11/00)*

#1: TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT
It comes as no surprise that *Tekken Tag Tournament* should head straight to the top of the charts, with the franchise's solid history and positive reviews across the board. Even though this cracking PS2 beat-'em-up lacks originality it shouldn't affect continually high sales.



#2: TIMESPLITTERS
Coming a close second to the top spot, *TimeSplitters* is still the best launch game available. Buy this manic first-person shooter and you'll be thoroughly rewarded – it plays like a demon and has far more reply value than the reigning number one.



#3: SSX
Settling in comfortably at number three is EA's spectacular snowboarding sim. With a range of fantastic tricks to perform, fabulous courses and graphics that sparkle, *SSX* should maintain its lofty chart position well into early 2001.

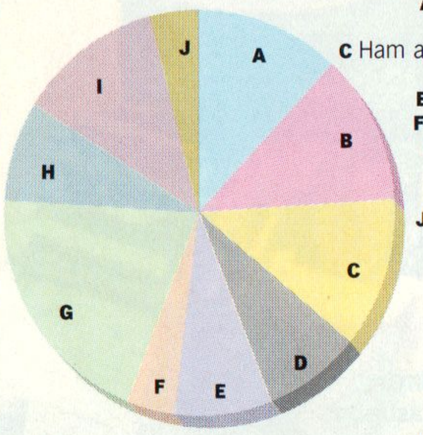
FACT BELCH

WE set the questions. YOU give the answers.

QUESTION: **We asked 25 gamers, "Which PS2 title are you most looking forward to in 2001?"**



QUESTION: **We asked the same people, "What is your favourite pizza topping?"**



**Source: A random sample of reader replies to PS2@futurenet.co.uk*

RETURN OF THE JEDI

Quake meets *The Phantom Menace*? Prepare for wisdom and warfare as *Star Wars: Obi-Wan* shifts from PC to the future...

From conceptual art to screenshots, *Obi-Wan* is well on the way to being finished.

A glow stick and some David Blaine trickery are all that separates you and droidy death.

"WE'RE LOOKING AT *Obi-Wan*. It's still very much a PC skew but we're looking at doing a PlayStation 2 version. We've done some R&D on it and we would be in a position to do it should we need to early next year. It's really a call on our part whether we think it would fit within the PlayStation 2 market..."

Speaking to *OPS2* back in August, LucasArts' President Simon Jeffrey confirmed that the San Rafael-based company were looking at bringing *Star Wars: Obi-Wan* to the PlayStation 2. This November, after over a year in development, LucasArts spectacularly cancelled the game for the PC with the following message.

"Following an extensive review of the project and a great deal of deliberation, LucasArts has ceased development of *Star Wars: Obi-Wan* for the PC. The expected breadth and scope of the *Obi-Wan* project could not be met given limitations of technology and the company's recently heightened quality standards. LucasArts is now planning to bring the game and its assets to a next generation console platform. Further announcements will be made in this regard next year."

Star Wars: Obi-Wan is LucasArts' latest *Episode One*-based game, featuring the spiritual growth of Obi-Wan Kenobi as he moves from Padawan learner to Jedi Knight. A mix of third- and first-person adventuring, Obi-Wan has only his lightsaber and the Force to help him as he takes on hoards of enemies, including battle droids, Tusken Raiders and a certain Sith Lord by the name of Darth Maul. Think LucasArts' ground-breaking PC shooter *Dark Forces* with a radically revamped 3D engine.

While LucasArts has done everything but confirm the game for the PlayStation 2, logic dictates the game's appearance on Sony's next gen console. While *Obi-Wan* is based on T*he Phantom Menace*, the gameplay moves in-between the various layers of the film's storyline. It's the same separate-but-equal approach as *Star Wars: Starfighter* and one favoured by Jeffrey for LucasArts' continuing relationship with the PlayStation 2, "We're much more interested in picking some aspect or character or situation from the movie and fleshing out a story," said Jeffrey. "We discovered people like *Star Wars* gaming because it expands the universe, does stuff outside the movie and creates new locales, new characters, new stories, new vehicles."

The game's PC background also makes the PlayStation 2 an obvious choice. "We knew that PS2 was going to be a pretty hard machine to develop for," explained Jeffrey back in August. "We approached it with a taskforce approach in mind rather than project-by-project. This meant we could see what technologies we could use to move code over (from PC) to PlayStation 2, that could then be optimised and the rendering would work. This enabled us to see whether this would work from an early stage rather than going hardware native from the get-go."

Expect an official announcement from LucasArts on *Star Wars: Obi-Wan* in the coming months. The Force is strong in this one... ☐ **MG**

SPY

MOVIES, GAMES (BUT NOT VIDEOS)

Anti-piracy measures mean a change in DVD playback for the PlayStation 2.

WITH THE EUROPEAN launch of the PlayStation 2 and the availability of PAL consoles, *OPS2* tests have revealed that the RGB playback for DVD has been disabled for the UK and Europe.

The best quality playback for DVD movies would be by using an RGB SCART lead. Unfortunately, if you connect your PS2 to your TV via an RGB SCART lead, it will only produce a green picture when playing DVDs. It will, however, give crystal-clear playback of PS2 and PSone games when used for that purpose.

The lead supplied with the PlayStation 2 will play back DVD movies, but it is not a 'proper' RGB SCART lead. It is an adapted composite lead (the standard three plug lead with red, white and yellow connectors that came with the PSone) with a SCART adaptor block on the end. You can tell it's not a true SCART connection because it only has 11 pins. This supplies a composite signal to your TV via the 21-pin SCART input. The quality of the picture is therefore exactly the same as if you removed the 21-pin SCART input and connected your PlayStation 2 to the TV via the standard yellow, red and white inputs.

Sony cite anti-piracy as the reason behind this decision, with the RGB playback disabled to prevent PS2 users from being able to copy DVDs to VHS at the highest quality. UK DVD players use a Macrovision system, which corrupts the RGB signal when it is connected directly via SCART to a VHS recorder, thus preventing 'perfect' pirate copies. This system has not been implemented for the PlayStation 2 and thus the green image appears when using a RGB SCART lead.

"The UK PlayStation 2 has been designed to meet the rules and regulations that all UK and European DVD players must adhere to," commented a spokesman for Sony Computer Entertainment Europe.

While the composite connector supplied in-box is better than the RF or TV aerial connection of yore, it's still not as good as the ideal RGB SCART connection. Here's a short guide on how to get the best possible quality out of your PlayStation 2's game playing and DVD capabilities.

GAMES

- Use the in-box composite lead which gives excellent quality images and sound. This can also be used for DVD playback.
- If you require the very best visuals, buy an RGB SCART lead – you may have used one for your PSone. Remember, this will not allow playback of DVD movies.

DVD MOVIES

- Use the in-box composite lead which gives excellent quality images and sound. This can also be used for games playback.
- If you require better visuals, buy an S-Video lead (cost around £15). This is superior to the composite connection as, like RGB SCART, it separates the video signals to give a sharper image close to RGB SCART quality. This lead will work for both games and DVD movies.
- For this, your TV will need an S-Video socket. If you do not have an S-Video socket on your TV, you can buy an adaptor block that allows you to plug S-Video into SCART. You can pick one of these up from good audio/TV shops. Note: this is still an S-Video signal despite being delivered to your TV via the SCART input.

**Thanks to Daniel Griffiths at Daily Radar (www.dailyradar.co.uk) for his brains. Note: See page 51 to see how DVD playback has been altered in Japanese PS2s.*

ILLUSTRATION: BEN KIRCHNER/PHOTOGRAPHY: LOUISE BROOM



//The UK PS2 has been designed to meet the rules that all UK DVD players must adhere to//



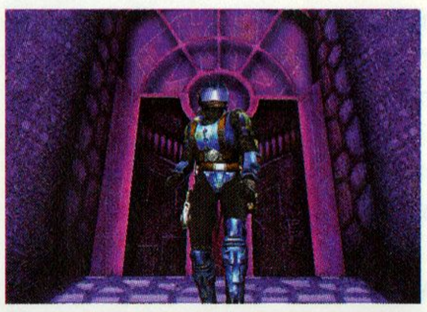
Everything's gone green... No SCART but S-Video will give a clearer image than composite.

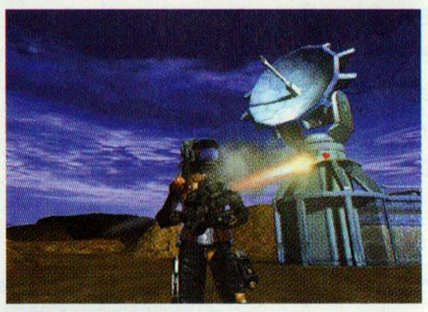


The *EverQuest* phenomenon scuttles towards the PlayStation 2 web.

IMPOSSIBLE WORLDS

Online RPG *EverQuest* confirmed for PS2 while *PlanetSide* moves into orbit.





***PlanetSide* aims to be a massive online FPS, with the freedom to define your own character.**

WHEN PLAYSTATION 2 goes online in 2001, console gamers will finally get the opportunity to experience the massive multiplayer environments of Verant Interactive's most famous epic, *EverQuest*. The game is an extremely popular *Dungeons & Dragons*-style RPG that allows Net addicts to create their own character and interact with a living, organic virtual 3D world with different species, social classes and settlements made up from thousands of other players. You can learn different spells, join in on adventures to magical locations, discover mysterious artefacts, form political alliances and wage brutal war, *EverQuest* gives you the freedom that other videogames can only squint at from a distance through cracked binoculars.

"I think (the PS2 version) will end up being a very different game," says Brad McQuaid, producer at Verant. "There are definitely a lot of questions: How do you patch in? How do you communicate with others without a keyboard?" McQuaid and the team want to create an online title that'll work specifically for PlayStation 2 and Dual Shock 2, rather than deliver a straight PC conversion, "Our first idea was just to port *EverQuest* to the console. It's like, no, we can take the same world and the same name, but it's not going to be the same game."

Sony Pictures Entertainment-owned Verant are also planning Force-based Internet antics with LucasArts' *Star Wars Galaxies* (see page 52) and sci-fi shoot-'em-up action of their own in *PlanetSide*. "We're aiming to create a huge multiplayer tactical first-person shooter," commented *PlanetSide*'s lead designer and producer Kevin McCann. "We have some role-playing, but it's very light. People aren't coming in here to socialise – they're going to come in to have a fight."

Featuring sublime graphics and immense continents varying from icy wastelands to sun-bleached deserts, *PlanetSide* will give gamers a choice of four corporations to represent, each with its own distinctive industry – science and research, the military, mining and technological. As your character progresses in the game, completing job assignments for your corporate 'sponsor' and getting more and more battle experience, you'll have access to increasingly advanced weapons, skills and equipment – such as assault vehicles that you'll be able to drive around in. "We're looking at getting 3,000-3,500 people per server," says McCann.

Although officially unconfirmed for the PS2 at this time, if the PC version is successful when it goes live in late 2001, it's difficult to imagine Verant and Sony Online Entertainment preventing this exciting online first-person blaster from exploding onto PS2. Be sure that *OPS2* will keep you bang up to date with the latest information on *EverQuest*, *Star Wars Galaxies* and *PlanetSide* as soon as we can. It looks like the next generation of the gaming world has just got much, much bigger. □ **JS**

**Thanks to* PC Gamer *and Daily Radar US. Check out www.verant.com*

shorts

»In a novel move SCEI has teamed up with Toyota in Japan to allow prospective car buyers the chance to try out *Gran Turismo 3* ahead of its launch there in February 2001. PlayStation 2 'experience booths' have been set up in dealerships across Japan to publicise the already eagerly anticipated racing sim.

»Following on from last issue's exclusive interview with *The Getaway* coder Team Soho, the team is also working on a PS2 version of *This Is Football*. The 128 bit kick about will include improved AI, 3,000 polygon player models, new special moves and faster, more responsive player movement. Expect more news soon.

»Codemasters has announced it is investing heavily in next generation graphics hardware to be able to meet the demands of the increased polygon-shifting power of PS2. The company wants their development teams to consist of a majority of graphic artists and animators.

»*Final Fantasy X* could sell as many as 2.5 million units in Japan according to Square's president, Hisashi Suzuki if SCEJ manage to shift their projected five million PS2s by the time of the game's launch. The eagerly-awaited RPG hits the shops in March 2001 in Japan, with a European release in November.

»Michael Jackson wasn't paid a penny to appear in Midway's *Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2*. Emmanuel Valdez, Lead Artist on the game told *OPS2*, "We got talking to Michael and he did it out of the goodness of his heart, just as a fan." The king of pop not only had his trademark dance routines motion captured, but was asked to do all of his own boxing moves as well.

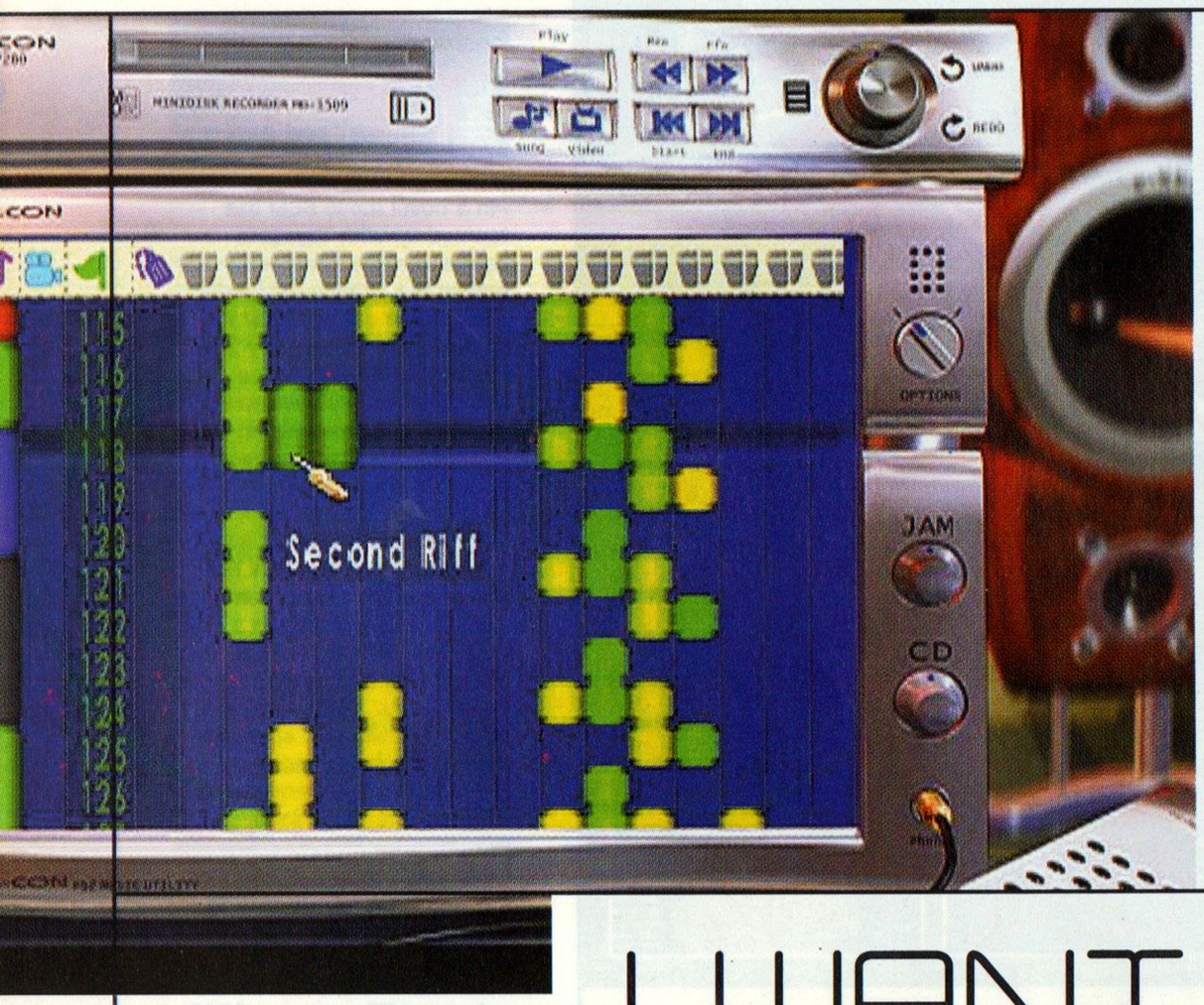
»A new BBC2 videogames programme based on the visceral deathmatches of *Unreal Tournament* has been "indefinitely postponed." According to a BBC spokesperson, "*Bleeding Thumbs* had to be technically jaw-dropping, exciting and capture the passion of gamers, but it just didn't work well enough in the end."

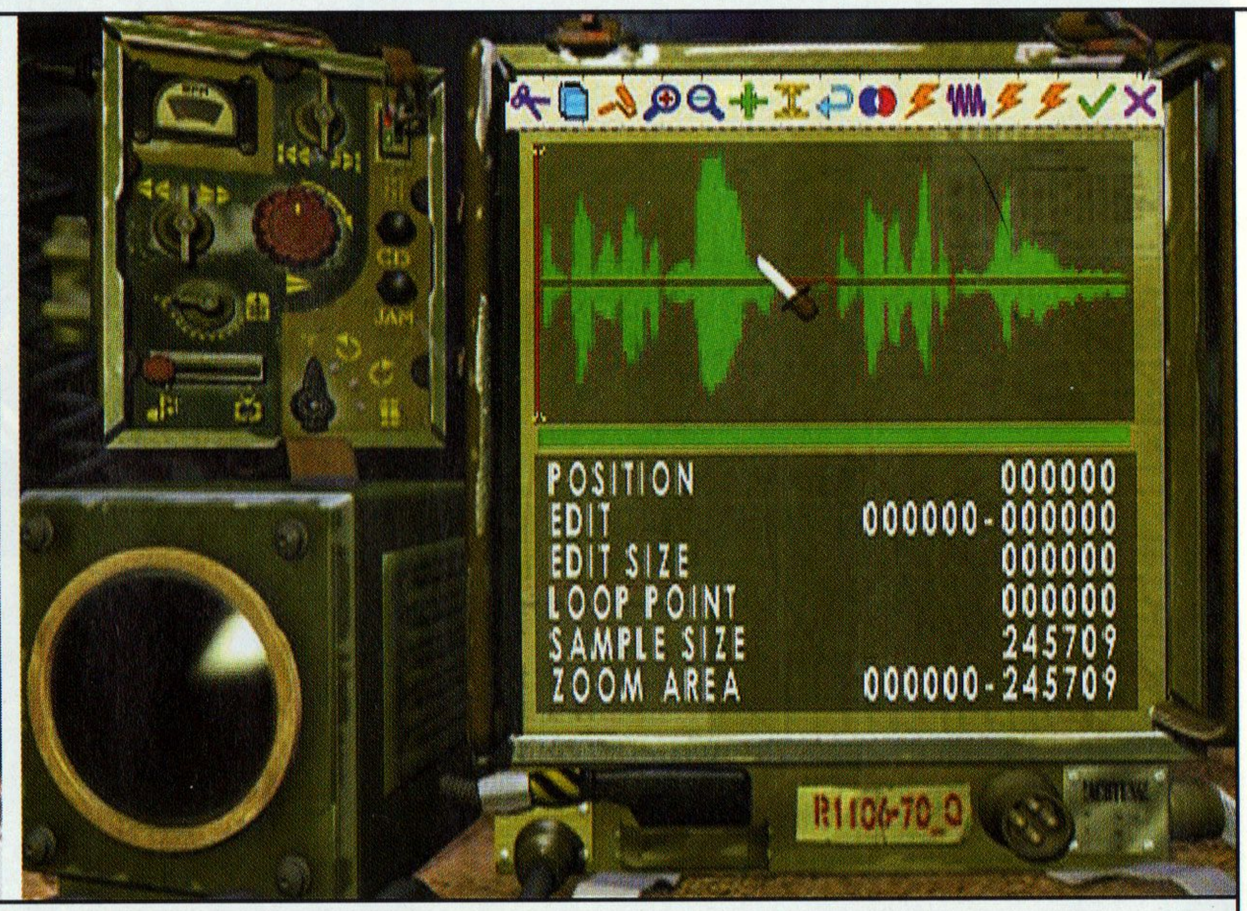
»According to Japanese sources, Namco is working on the long-awaited arcade version of *Tekken 4*. This true sequel to *Tekken 3* will continue the story of the characters and hopefully hit Sony-developed PS2-compatible System 246 by Easter 2001.



BLUELINES

Koei has announced that their *Kessen 2* sequel may be playable online, allowing players to command great armies over continents »THQ are to publish a new *WWF* title on PS2 in 2001 incorporating Digimask technology, that allows gamers to create a wrestler with their own face »Infogrames has inked a deal with Funimation Productions to develop PS2 games based on the *Dragon Ball Z* cartoon »In a blast from the past, old Amiga publisher Cinemaware is returning with a PS2 title *Robin Hood: Defender of the Crown*





***MTV Music Generator* has enjoyed a complete graphics overhaul with user-friendly 'themed' interfaces.**

I WANT MY MTV

Codemasters and Jester ramp up the volume with their PS2 *Music Generator.*

CODEMASTERS HAS SECURED the worldwide licensing rights to use the famous MTV brand with their forthcoming Jester Interactive-developed PS2 title, *MTV Music Generator.* The game builds on the success of previous BAFTA-nominated *Music* games, but has added a host of innovative new features. *OPS2* spoke exclusively to Tim Wright, Development Director at Jester Interactive to get the full story on the franchise that allows gamers to create their own UK garage ditties and Ibiza club anthems.

"The power offered by the PS2 hardware has given us a huge advantage over previous incarnations," explains Wright. "We've doubled the number of available music channels to 48 and because the PS2's CD drive runs faster, riffs load very quickly, rather than the couple of seconds delay encountered on the PSone. Saved songs and videos will also load much quicker too." For the PS2 version, the Jester team has now expanded the number of music styles covered and the sample memory space available is four times greater, allowing more room for vocals. "At the moment I think we're looking at around 3,000 new samples and of those, around 1,000 are new vocals – all reproduced at CD quality," says Wright.

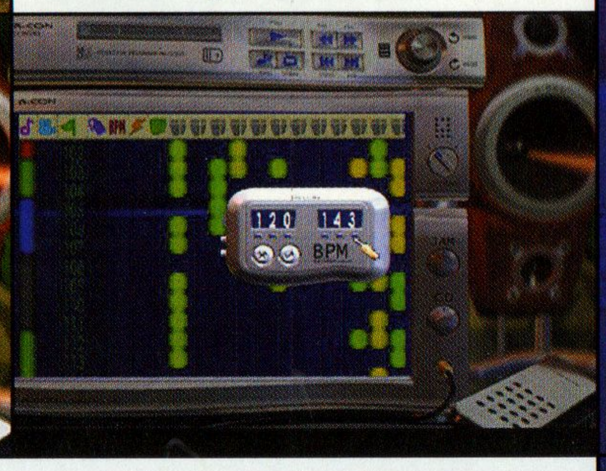
He also confirmed that *MTV Music Generator* will include the popular 'jamming' session available on *Music 2000* for PSone, but this time up to eight players will be able to simultaneously take part in both audio and visual jams. The whole graphical interface has been revamped, switching from a side-scrolling 'sequencer' format to one that is negotiated from top to bottom, primarily because TVs are wider than they are tall, so more track information can be displayed. According to Wright, this change will, "Make the whole process of music creation, much easier and intuitive – we reckon you can create a track three times quicker than you could with any previous version."

With support for the PlayStation 2's Dolby Digital, *MTV Music Generator* should be throbbing the nation's speakers when the title is released in May 2001. ☐ **JS**





//With *MTV Music Generator* you can create a track three times quicker//





coin-op

With **Guy Woodward** editor of coin-op bible *AB Europe*.





"Police! Camera! Action!" Konami's ace *911*.

911 IS NO JOKE

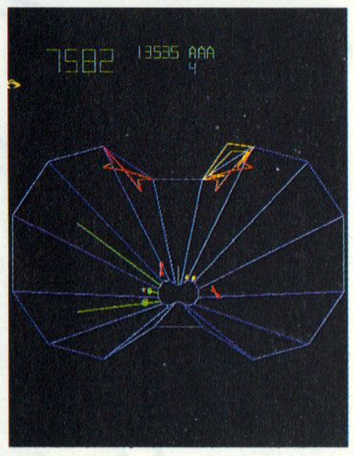
Bemani games have always been popular in Japan. Now they want to take over the world.

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT it was safe to go back to the arcade, Japanese game developers have outdone themselves. The latest in a long line of Konami's music-based games, *Para Para Paradise*, employs motion sensor technology to chart the shapes sculpted by players and rates them according to their closeness to the choreography shown on screen. The so-called Bemani range of games have been huge in Japan, but then again many Japanese teensters still consider *Saturday Night Fever* to be cutting edge cinema. *(Which it is – Disco Ed)*

Sooner or later, cynics said, the craze would pass, and with the fad not catching on in Europe or the US, Konami would be left with a large hole in its output. Profits from the games are waning, yet Konami continues to push back the boundaries of arcade gameplay. Using the same technology as *Para Para, Police 911,* its latest shoot-'em-up, tracks players' movements as they try to dodge oncoming fire and take cover behind buildings and vehicles. It's hoped this new genre should have a larger fan base. In particular, with its cop theme, the title looks set to appeal to hero-worshipping American public, who will literally be able to throw themselves in to the action. ☐ **GW**

lost classics

Games of coin-ops past.



•03: TEMPEST (1981)

When *Tempest* was presented to Atari in 1981, the company said it was too much like *Space Invaders*. So the designer went away and recreated a recurring nightmare he'd been having, which included the addition of monsters, that emerge from underground tubes. The result was a cult classic, whose success was later attributed to putting players in a Zen like trance. And who says arcade fans are freaks?



BLOODY ARCADE GAME

Namco Roars onto System 246.

When Namco confirmed the release of a PS2-based arcade hardware platform named System 246, the bets were down as to which game developer would embrace the format first. In the event, bookies have cleaned up, with little known 8ing Raizing teaming up with publisher HudsonSoft to produce *Bloody Roar 3*. The fighting game sees a variety of characters do battle in an enclosed combat area, with the aim of landing enough blows to fill their power gauge, at which stage they are transformed into a beast-like creature, with extra strength and moves. Scary stuff.



Easy tiger: *Bloody Roar 3* brings out the beast in gamers.



DRINKING GAMES

Calling time on boring nights in the pub.

With revenues continuing to drop, coin-op manufacturers are turning to the consumer sector for more user-friendly content. A variety of generic 'soft' terminals are hitting the UK pub market, capable of housing multiple applications, from digital music, to sports and film clips, Internet access and games – of a sort. So far, the games' content is limited to fairly primitive puzzle and trivia games of the *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*-type, few of which are from recognised sources. However the UK's largest operator Leisure Link, has approached a number of consumer games publishers (believed to include Codemasters and Empire) regarding content for its terminals. Any excuse for a pint.



Your local could soon be host to a drunken session of *GT3*.



Movers and shakers: New PS2 peripherals will literally rock your world.

ILLUSTRATION: WILL BARRAS

PHAT CONTROLLER

Immersion brings innovative gaming technology to the PS2.

A CALIFORNIA-BASED COMPANY have just licensed new technology for the PlayStation 2, which should allow game developers to incorporate a much higher level of realism to control interfaces, such as through the use of steering wheels or joysticks. TouchSense, as it has been called by its creators, Immersion, is a 'middleware' product – software and tools used in the development of videogames.

TouchSense can simulate a wide variety of effects such as gunfire, explosions and engine vibration as well as the dynamics of different environments such as water and quicksand. "In flying simulations you can feel the aerodynamic forces of the plane through a TS joystick. If you're in a hard dive, there's a lot of resistance when you pull back on the stick to fight against gravity. You can also make a wheel, stick or joypad feel slippery – almost like you're on ice – so you have to grip the controller tighter and make very slow careful movements or you'll feel it slip out of control," says Dr Dean Chang, Director of Evangelism and Development.



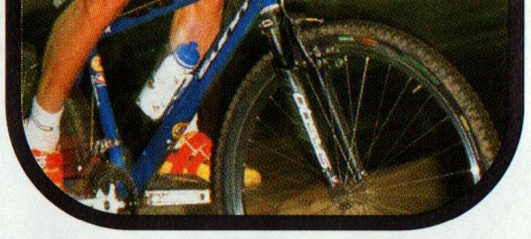
Dr Dean Chang: Director of Evangelism and Development at Immersion.

"At the moment, PS2 has Dual Shock 2, which is a very simple vibration on, vibration off feedback. Our technology is far more advanced. Imagine for example if in a driving game you suddenly become airborn, a TS steering wheel will suddenly become very light as opposed to on the ground when the tyres are in contact with the road – it's very realistic."

Polyphony Digital's *Gran Turismo 3* is to be the first game to take advantage of this technology, so PS2 gamers will be able to buy a steering wheel that reacts realistically to the on-screen action. Dr Chang also revealed that other companies could take advantage of TouchSense for their upcoming titles, "EA is very excited about the technology coming to PS2 because it already knows how to do this from its experience on PCs." What about a company such as Square – could they produce a peripheral that would give *Final Fantasy* gamers the sensation of summoning Guardian Forces and other magical abilities? "When our tools and middleware kit is released, Square would have access to the software code to put in their game to create these sensations in a piece of hardware that's compatible from one of our licencee's products – joystick, steering wheel, joypad or mouse or design a custom controller."

Immersion is also developing more expensive, high fidelity simulators for medical simulations, where surgeons can train and actually feel what an operation would be like – what it's like to cut tissue and cartilage or perform an injection. "It's a very different market, but it's worth pointing out that all of our current gaming products just a few years ago were used in some of these high-end applications," continues Dr Chang.

At the moment, only third-party manufacturers will be producing USB peripherals based on Immersion's TouchSense middleware. SCEE's Director of Technology Paul Holman told *OPS2* that, "If it's a USB peripheral, SCEE isn't too involved – other than Q&A [quality control]. The main issue would be cost, because for the PlayStation market, peripherals tend to be at maximum, often the same as the price of the software, so more expensive items simply don't sell well." However, SCE's technical support of companies such as Immersion mean that the PlayStation 2 will continue to inspire cutting edge technology, giving console owners a much more exciting and unique gaming experience. □ **JS**



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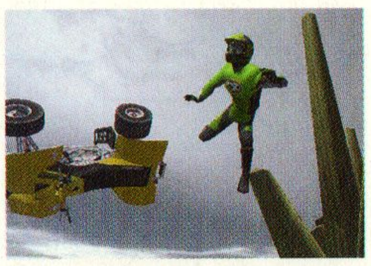
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ALWAYS ON SALE



WHEELS ON FIRE

SCEA confirms *ATV Offroad Fury* and *Twisted Metal: Black* for Stateside release.







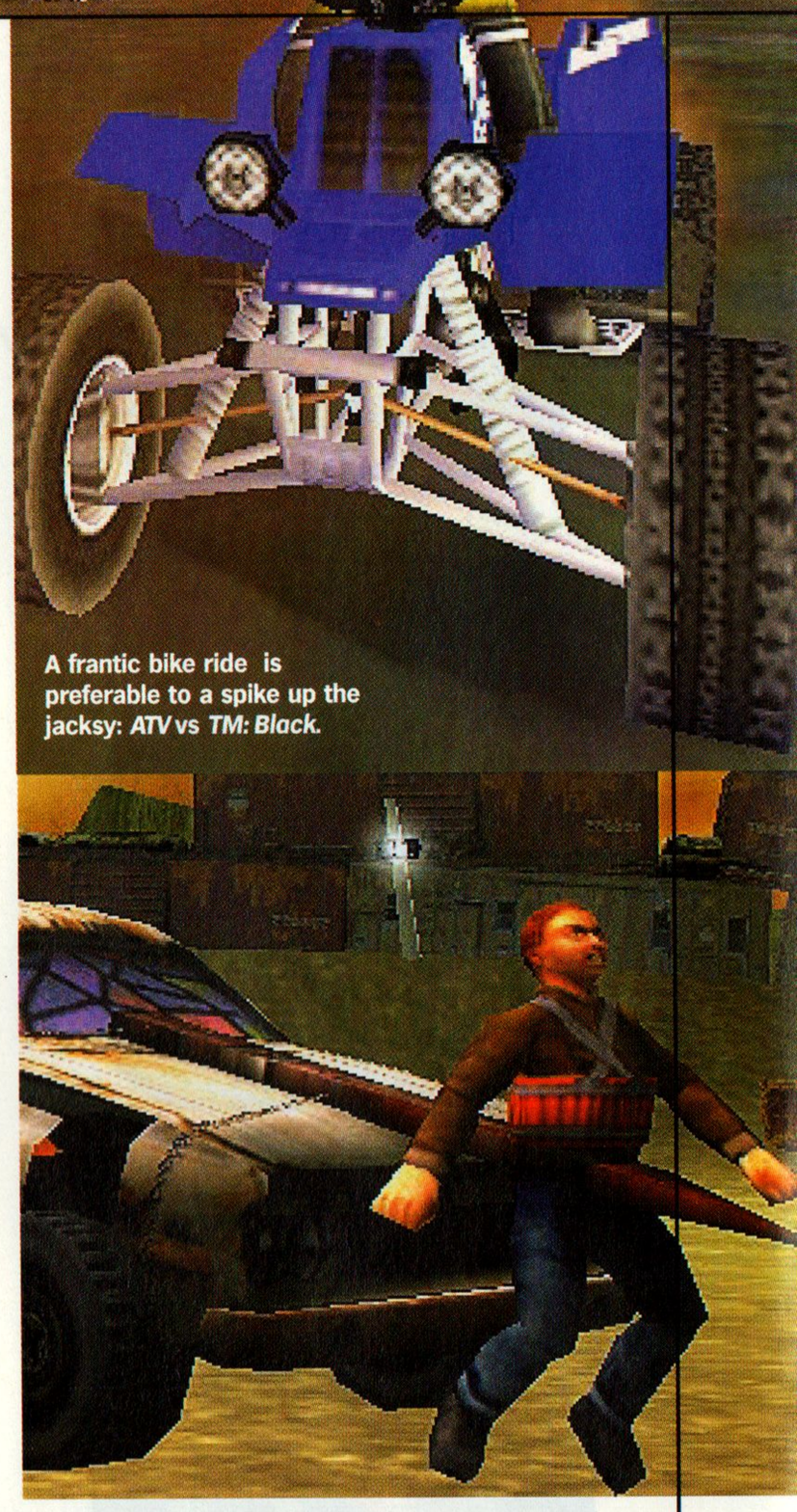
Injury comes to us all... The moto-madness of SCEA.

WHILE SCEE'S IN-HOUSE titles *WipEout Fusion*, *F1 2001*, *DropShip*, *The Getaway* and *Fable* ready themselves for a 2001 launch, SCE's American operation has announced two homegrown racers. Both due for release in the first half of 2001, *ATV Offroad Fury* and *Twisted Metal: Black* are a world away from SCEA's standard crop of American college football and basketball releases.

Announce this November, *ATV Offroad Fury* is a quad-bike based 3D racing game featuring all-terrain vehicles. The game is being developed by Rainbow Studios, whose previous credits include *Motocross Madness 1* and *2* for the PC. The game is being touted a fun, highly-playable racer with the emphasis placed on bike control. Players will have complete control over their ATV vehicles, either on the ground or in the air (think a chunky version of the PSone's *Jet Rider* series) allowing you to sling the bike around. Stunts are also rewarded so expect to be pulling Superman moves *Tony Hawk*-style. Add on reports of fine graphics, real ATV manufacturers (Yamaha, Kawasaki and Honda), four-player split-screen action, customisable bikes, over 20 world-designed tracks and *ATV Offroad Fury*'s blend of arcade fun and real-life physics could see the game carve itself a unique niche in a world of *Gran Turismo* clones.

Also on the cards from SCEA is an update of the PSone's deranged racer, *Twisted Metal*. While the first two games were well received, the last two *Twisted Metals* were decidedly below par. Good news then that *Twisted Metal: Black* is being developed by Incognito Studios, staffed by people who worked on the first two versions of the game. Once again, *Twisted Metal* has been designed as a fighting game played out in vehicles. Mayhem and auto-destruction are still at its heart while old favourites such as psycho-clown Sweet Tooth return, but the game has undergone a decidedly dark makeover. Incognito has namechecked such unsettling films as *Silence of the Lambs*, *Seven* and *Jacob's Ladder* as influences and the interactive game environments certainly reflect that feel. A total of 14 vehicles – all of which transform mech-style – and eight arenas are on offer, with generous helpings of weapons on hand to dish out the carnage. Car-control and response time has also been tightened considerably, while the action moves at a speedy 60 fps. With dank weather and eminently squashable pedestrians, *Twisted Metal: Black* should be back on form for its mid-2001 release.

While SCEE doesn't currently have *ATV Offroad Fury* and *Twisted Metal: Black* down for a UK release, the near-finished state of development for both games plus uncertain release dates for SCEE's crop of in-house titles points to a potential appearance over this side of the pond. We'll keep you posted. □ **MG**



A frantic bike ride is preferable to a spike up the jacksy: *ATV* vs *TM: Black*.



BLUELINES

Fantastic news from EA – there is to be a sequel to the top-selling snowboarding sim *SSX* ››Check out www.subliminal.co.uk for info about the designers of the rather smart and exclusive PS2 pre-order booklet ››Japan-based Ergo Soft has developed MP3 music and browsing software for when the PS2 is Internet-ready ››Following on from the *Devil May Cry* and *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* announcements from Capcom, there are whispers from Japan that an RPG based on *Street Fighter* is in development. Now that's scary...





Fans of Andy McNab's charming Gulf War novels should love this PS2 action title.



GULF WAR SYNDROME

Take on Saddam in *Conflict: Desert Storm*.

PIVOTAL GAMES' FIRST PS2 title is to be *Conflict: Desert Storm*, a fast-paced combat sim based on events in the infamous Middle East conflict, with heavy emphasis on stealth and infiltrating enemy positions.

Jim Bambra, Managing Director at Pivotal explained exclusively to *OPS2* how the strategy and action game will work. "You'll command four Special Forces soldiers and so will have lots of tactical options – from where to set up the sniper's ambush point to how best to sneak past an enemy guard." Players get the chance to use a cache of army weaponry ranging from knives and heavy machine guns all the way up to cruise missiles, says the enthusiastic Bambra. There'll also be opportunities to commandeer different vehicles and the AI is being finely tuned so your team of soldiers react realistically in battle situations. The scale of the game is huge, with the third-person 3D engine creating an impressive draw distance in all directions bringing to life ear-cracking explosions and realistic character movement.

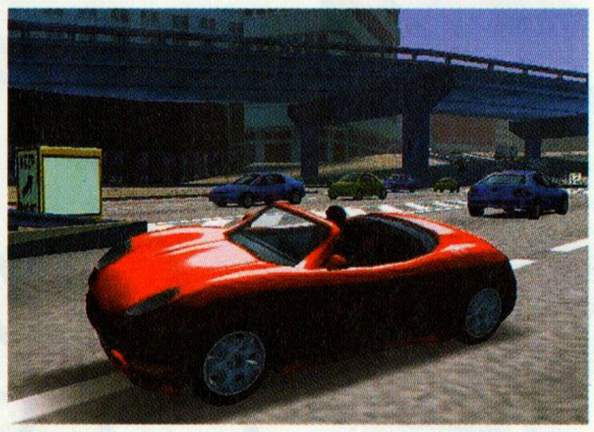
Bath-based Pivotal was previously called Pumpkin Studios – the team was behind the PSone game *Warzone 2100* and worked for Eidos on *Saboteur*, before taking on its new name earlier this year. Publisher SCi recently acquired a 10% stake in the developer and the two companies are now working together on a game based on the classic Steve McQueen film, *The Great Escape*. This will use the same technology Bambra and his team have utilised on their Gulf War epic. The only disappointing news is that gamers with itchy trigger fingers will have to wait until spring 2002 when *Conflict: Desert Storm* is planned to make its gung-ho PlayStation 2 debut. □ **JS**

Careering the wrong way down a busy road has never been so much fun.

KING OF THE ROAD

Shiny Red Car, a rough and tumble racing game from Criterion Studios.





Criterion's *Shiny Red Car* promises classic arcade-style multi-vehicle mayhem.

GUILDFORD DEVELOPER, CRITERION is currently more renowned for its PlayStation 2 graphics library RenderWare, used by 200 developers worldwide, than for its games. This situation is about to change with two new PS2 titles which will ally classic gameplay with some of the best graphics around.

The first is provisionally-titled *Stunt Squad*. An update of Criterion's underrated Dreamcast effort *TrickStyle*, *Stunt Squad* is a hugely impressive hoverboard trick game in the style of *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*. It's also currently bound by a secrecy agreement so despite a possible spring release, *OPS2* can't reveal any more until next month.

The second game is further from completion but already looks to be a winner. An arcade-style road racer, its working title is *SRC* – which stands for *Shiny Red Car* – but the team are also keen on calling it *Driving Hero*. If that sounds like a Japanese game name, the inference is deliberate. *SRC*'s major influences are Namco's *Ridge Racer*, Sega's *Outrun* and Konami's *Thrill Drive*, Jap arcade driving classics the lot of them.

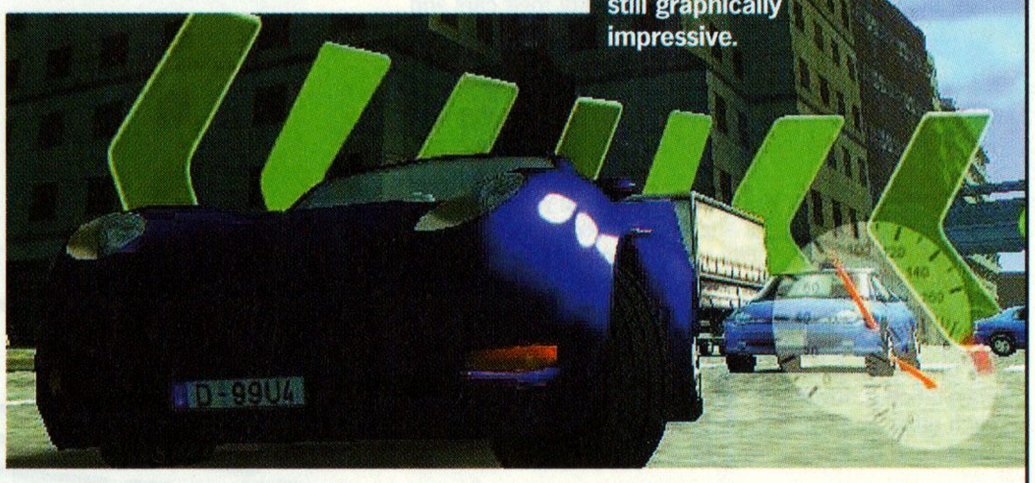
SRC prioritises speed over simulation. The key to the game's appeal will be the ability to weave through the traffic lining the game's busy thoroughfares, whether these are vast American freeways, neon-flooded Japanese backstreets or the narrow lanes of a European city.

"You know how every time you're stuck in a jam, you get the urge to knock the car in front out of the way, overtake on the inside and drive like arse?" says Criterion's Creative Manager Alex Ward summarising the *SRC* ethic. "The aim of our game will be to speed like a madman through rush hour traffic."

Ward is realistic about the driving game competition which will be plentiful by the time *SRC* is ready for release.

"We can't beat *Gran Turismo 3* – at the moment I don't think anyone can – so we're going to do something different. *SRC* is not mission-based and it's not a simulation. It's not about navigation, or fetch-and-carry, or spending time in the garage. It's about fun."

Read *OPS2*'s full exclusive report on Criterion Studios next month. ☐ **SR**



These work-in-progress screenshots are still graphically impressive.

SPY

THE BEAUTIFUL

Every issue, we bring you *OPS2*'s righteous quest for the perfect videogame. Number three in this never-ending series? The most perfect driving game ever. Get behind the wheel...

1 A *Gran Turismo*-style range of gorgeous customisable cars from all the major manufacturers such as Porsche and Jaguar. These can be upgraded and souped-up for maximum speed and handling. Also there should be a choice of 'fantasy' vehicles such as the hi-tech Batmobile and James Bond's Aston Martin DB5 (complete with ejector seat).

2 Damage to the cars as in *Driver*. This is important for the realism of the game and to make smashing into other vehicles – including good ol' police cars – all the more exciting, with bits falling off, shattering windscreens and exploding engines. Oh yes.

3 The violent running-over of pedestrians and passers-by from PSone cult hit, *Carmageddon*. People can also damage cars, get flattened by debris and fly through windscreens. Ambulances, fire engines and police cars rush to the scene to clear up the horrifying mess that you make.

4 *Carmageddon*'s hilarious weapons that allow you to electrocute pedestrians and hurl other vehicles into the air with giant comedy springs. Also includes missiles, machine guns, rusty chainsaws and other essential car accessories.

5 You can get out of your car and hijack any other vehicle à la *GTA3* and *Driver 2*. Modes of transport available include lorries, bicycles, ambulances, vans and those bloody annoying mini-scooter things.

6 You can drive around any major city around the world, complete with ultra-realistic representations of the shops, buildings, roads – literally everything is reproduced accurately from satellite photographs and meticulously prepared video footage. This allows gamers to, say, deliberately crash their vehicles headlong into a packed Starbucks or Dixons. We're looking at you, *The Getaway*.

7 Plenty of classic car chase obstacles, such as two men carrying a pane of glass, crates full of live chickens and rickety fruit stalls. Think the Beasties' *Sabotage* for cars.

8 Numerous game views including an in-car one that shows food sliding about on the dashboard and an ashtray stuffed with spent fag ends.

9 In-car stereo that allows you to choose the kind of music you want, so you can enjoy the light, bouncy pop tunes of Britney Spears as you embark on a massive pedestrian-killing orgy of death. Like *GTA* – but better.

10 Scenarios taken from classic films such as *The Italian Job* and *The French Connection*, plus hundreds of arcade game challenges including 'Running Red Lights' and 'Driving only on pavements'. Also crams in a stunt challenge mode for Lee Majors fans. Let's hope Reflections' *Stuntman* does the latter.

11 Extensive replays, similar to those in *Driver 2*, that allow you to choose different camera angles and cut together your own movie sequences. Includes *Matrix*-type spinny camera special effects for that modish Hollywood feel.

12 Other vehicles react in a realistic way to your driving exploits, causing accidents, pile-ups and traffic jams. Road rage incidents provoke people to get out of their cars and start petrol strike-fuelled punch-ups.

13 Incredible playability – the silky, intuitive car control of *Gran Turismo* mixed with the arcade immediacy of *Driver*. Runs smoothly at a constant at 75 fps. Or faster.

14 The ability to import photos of any face you want, for grafting onto pedestrians and other drivers. This would give you the unique opportunity of, for example, smashing into Jeremy Clarkson's brand new Ford Mondeo until both him and the car are completely crushed beyond recognition.

15 Online connectivity that creates a virtual city of PlayStation 2 drivers all careering around, crashing into each other and trying to perform the most outrageous stunts and tricks.



GAME



ILLUSTRATION: ARTHUR MOUNT

PlayStation®2 RELEASE DATES

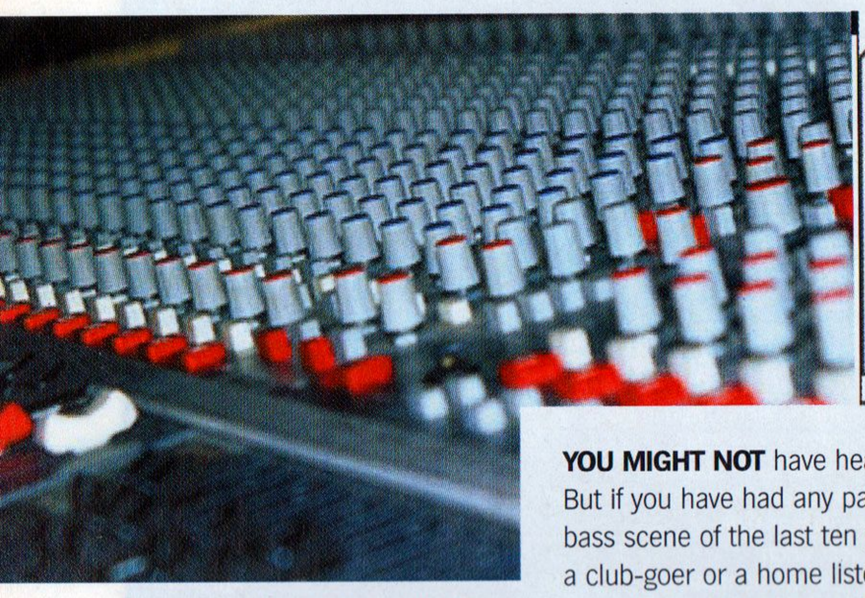
GAME NAME	GENRE	PUBLISHER
January 2001		
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	Adventure	3DO
Driving Emotion Type-S	Racing sim	EA
Eternal Ring	RPG	Ubi Soft
Evergrace	RPG	Ubi Soft
F1 Racing Championship	Racing sim	Ubi Soft
Kessen	Strategy	EA
NBA 2001	Sports sim	EA Sports
Donald Duck: Quack Attack	Platformer	Ubi Soft
Rayman Revolution	Platformwe	Ubi Soft
Street Fighter EX3	Beat-'em-up	Capcom
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001	Golf sim	EA Sports
Unreal Tournament	First-person shooter	Infogrames
February 2001		
Armoured Core 2	Mech shoot-'em-up	Ubi Soft
Army Men: Air Attack 2	Adventure	3DO
ESPN NBA 2Night	Sports sim	Konami
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy	Adventure	Midway
Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec	Racing sim	SCEE
MDK2 Armageddon	Adventure	Interplay
Silpheed	Action/Shoot-'em-up	Swing
Stepping Selection	Dancing	Jaleco
Stunt GP	Arcade racer	Virgin
War Monkeys	War sim	Take 2
Warriors Of Might & Magic	Adventure	3DO
March 2001		
7 Blades	Adventure	Konami
Commandos 2	Strategy	Eidos
ESPN Hockey Night	Sports sim	Konami
Exhibition Of Speed	Racing sim	Titus
F1 2001	Racing sim	SCEE
The Jungle Book Groove Party	Dance game	Ubi Soft
Knockout Kings 2001	Boxing sim	EA Sports
Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver 2	Adventure	Eidos
No One Lives Forever	Adventure	Fox Interactive
Paris/Dakar Rally	Rally sim	Acclaim
Project Eden	Adventure	Eidos
Shadow Of Memories	Adventure	Konami
The Bouncer	RPG/Adventure	Square
The World Is Not Enough	First-person shooter	EA
Winback	Adventure	Midas
WDL Thunder Tanx	Strategy/Shoot-'em-up	3DO
Zone of the Enders	Mech shoot-'em-up	Konami
Unconfirmed second quarter 2001		
Age of Empires 2	Strategy	Konami
Carrier	Adventure	Jaleco
Concept Car Challenge	Arcade racer	Activision
Dark Cloud	RPG	SCEE
Dropship	Action-adventure	SCEE
Ephemeral Fantasia	RPG	Konami
Extermination	Adventure	SCEE
Herdy Gerdy	Platform	Eidos
Kart Fury	Arcade racer	Midway
Klonoa 2	Platform	SCEE
Lotus Challenge	Racing sim	Virgin
Master Rally	Racing sim	Microids
MTV Music Generator	Music creator	Codemasters
NBA Hoopz	Sports sim	Midway
No One Lives Forever	First-person shooter	Fox
Oni	Adventure	Take 2
Red Faction	First-person shooter	THQ
Robot Warlords	Strategy/Shoot-'em-up	Midas
Sky Gunner	Arcade flight sim	SCEE
Sky Odyssey	Arcade flight sim	SCEE
Spy Hunter	Arcade racer	Midway
Star Wars: Starfighter	Shoot-'em-up	Activision
Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing	Arcade racer	Activision
The Summoner	RPG	THQ
Titanium Angels	Shoot-'em-up	SCi
UEFA 2001	Football sim	Take 2
WipEout Fusion	Future racer	SCEE
Unconfirmed third quarter 2001		
Grand Theft Auto 3	Adventure	Take 2
Rally Circuits Africa	Rally sim	Rage
Technomage	RPG/Adventure	Infogrames
The Getaway	Arcade racer	SCEE
Wing Over 3	Flight sim	JVC
Unconfirmed fourth quarter 2001		
Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons Of Liberty	Adventure	Konami
Starsky & Hutch	Adventure	Empire
Eighth Dawn	Light gun game	Empire
Ghostmaster	Adventure	Empire
The Italian Job	Arcade racer	SCi

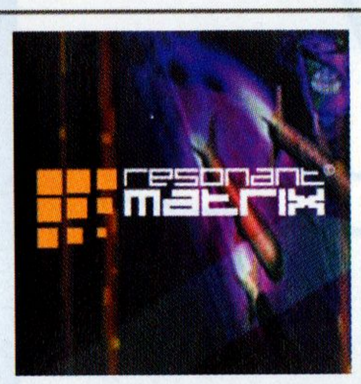
**Game release dates are correct at the time of going to press. All names and dates are subject to change.*

SPY

DRUMS, BASS AND PS2

Seminal dance label Moving Shadow is bringing its sonic mayhem to PS2. We talk to label founder, Rob Playford.





RESONANT MATRIX

PAGE 1 OF 2

Resonant Matrix is a complete music and sound design service to the audio-visual entertainment industry.
With over ten years experience of A&R research, record production, a huge list of contacts throughout the entire dance industry, and a comprehensive understanding of all related legal and contractual issues, Resonant Matrix is able to offer an unrivalled service for companies looking for the very best musical resources.

Resonant Matrix already has extensive experience of this market, working with high profile computer-game designers, including Sony Computer Entertainment, Psygnosis, Activision, Codemasters and Rockstar / Take 2 Interactive.



From its origins in the clubs to recently-produced *MSX00.1* interactive CD magazine (centre) to Rockstar's *Midnight Club* (right), Playford is keeping himself busy.

YOU MIGHT NOT have heard of Rob Playford. But if you have had any part in the drum-and-bass scene of the last ten years – be it as a DJ, a club-goer or a home listener – the chances are you will have heard something by him.

As the founder of Moving Shadow (now firmly established as a stalwart label of the scene) Playford has risen in stature to become something of an ambassador for the music. And in working with Goldie on his 1995 album, *Timeless*, he helped define what the media now generically terms 'drum and bass'. Two years later, Moving Shadow made its entrance into Hollywood by providing music for *The Jackal* and gangster flick *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. The next progression? Music for videogames.

In 1998 UK software developer Codemasters approached Moving Shadow after hearing tracks the label's E-Z Rollers duo, and asked them to provide the music for PSone racing game *TOCA 2*. Codemasters further licensed Moving Shadow's *Soundclash* as the front-end intro sequence music. Further videogame contracts across different platforms and publishers swiftly followed, the electronic, mechanical and futuristic style of Moving Shadow's output easily lending itself to the computer-entertainment experience.

With Resonant Matrix, the game-specific sub-division of Moving Shadow, now established, Playford has entered a new age of videogaming by working with PS2. Their first project was crim sim racer *Midnight Club*. After this interview it was also revealed that Resonant Matrix/Moving Shadow was in negotiations with Rockstar over producing the music for the forthcoming *Grand Theft Auto 3*.

//The obvious thing was to sync the style of the tracks with the game itself//

Why did you decide to get involved with games music?
The main driving force behind us wanting to get involved is that music for videogames is actually shit. Mostly this is because the people in charge of such things don't have a clue about the additional experience that can be added to a game with the inclusion of decent audio. One thing we noticed was that people, including ourselves, were just turning down the soundtrack on their games, leaving on the SFX and putting on a CD that was more appropriate to their lifestyle and gaming behaviour instead. This leads to a disassociation between the game and the soundtrack and the obvious thing seemed to be to sync the style of the tracks with the game itself.

Does this sort of music make more money than the record label?
Some yes, some no. We do varying scales of projects with all aspects of Moving Shadow's business. We have had some great game projects that we've been involved with this year, that thankfully have been very successful for everybody involved.

Which section do you devote more time to?
It's all part of the Shadow machine, really, so it's pretty hard to think about it in those separate terms. That's what we're trying to get across to people – that this is what we do, day in day out already, for a known audience and reward. It's a reflection of the way we live our lives and not just a way of making money.

What is it about Moving Shadow/Resonant Matrix and its artists that lends itself to next gen console music?
Diversity, attitude and quality, I hope. Lots of people, especially of the game-playing type, can relate to the styles covered by our artists. There is an obvious contrast between us and other labels in this respect.

Is it different producing music for games to what you have done in the past?
Not at all. It's the impact that you have to get across on the dancefloor, and that's the same for a game. The people that are playing are the people that go to the clubs. It's not like *Midnight Club* is going to attract the type of gamer who is into a group like Steps. A lot of the people who come to listen to music in clubs are the same people who will be buying PS2s, so it makes sense.

What was the working relationship between Dom and Roland and the developers of *Midnight Club*?
With Dom it was a case of see the stages, vibe off the visuals and be inspired enough to translate the energy into sound. Luckily for the developers, Dom went to San Diego to check out the programming early enough to help prevent some quite embarrassing mistakes they had made in the design of the game. Dom was able to point out that certain buildings didn't look quite how they had been drawn, and that in the UK we don't have double yellow lines running down the middle of the road… This was also the time that his early ideas for the music were either modified or strengthened and so it turned out to be quite a valuable time for all.

How was it different working with Rockstar?
Well, some of the guys at Rockstar are fans of ours and when they thought of putting some cool music along with a title of theirs, we were the ones they called. Luckily we've had the pleasure of working with some really innovative companies with all the projects that we've done. However, it's great to see any company really take an initiative and start to kick the industry up the arse. So I really respect Rockstar for that… □ **GW**



Man in the hat: Moving Shadow head honcho Rob Playford.

SPY



HATCHING POPEGG

OPS2 gets to grips with Sony's new PS2 colour printer.

SONY'S PS2-COMPATIBLE PopEgg printer arrived at the *OPS2* office just before this issue went to print – and a very nice piece of kit it is too. Priced ¥15,000 (£94), the PopEgg is carved from stylish white plastic with transparent sides that can be customised to display any image and comes complete with a colour/b&w ink cartridge, USB and power lead, instructions (um, currently being translated) and a copy of *PrintFan*. This software – replete with twee, annoying music – allows you to create designs and import photos from any PictureParadise-approved digital camera, such as the new Sony Cyber-shot DSC-P1.

Once you've created your modern art masterpiece, you can then print it out on the PopEgg's unusual postcard-sized paper to send to friends, slap in a clip-frame or use with other designs to create an unusual montage. PopEgg is big news in Japan and numerous compatible games and utilities are already lined up for release. These include a children's art game *Print Hour*, fishing sim *Lake Masters EX* and a new version of *Primal Image*. For the uninitiated, *Primal Image* is a game where you must pose virtual bikini-clad girls to pose in various positions and 'take' their photos. *Primal Image for Printer* will enable you to print out your efforts and create, well, dirty postcards. 3DO's upcoming PS2 RPG *Might and Magic: Day of the Destroyer* is also mentioned in the PopEgg promotional material as being able to link-up with the printer.

With Japanese games giants such as Konami, Square and Taito already on board to produce compatible games titles in the future, PopEgg lis assured a future as a fun, if unessential piece of PS2 hardware – although SCEE has yet to confirm when it'll make the long haul over to the UK. Next issue, *OPS2* will have an in-depth hands-on report on the printer and what you can create using a PS2 and digital camera. ☐ **JS**

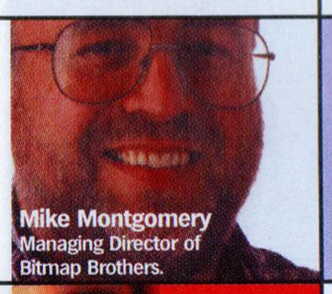
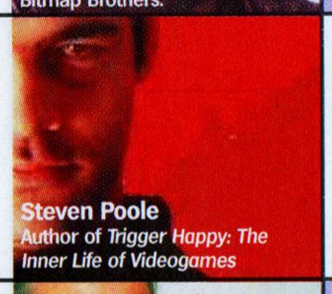
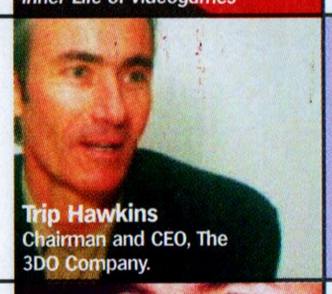
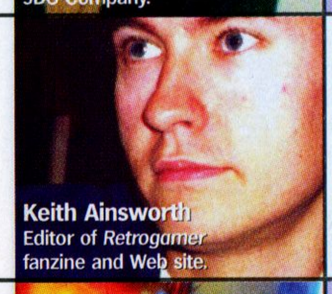
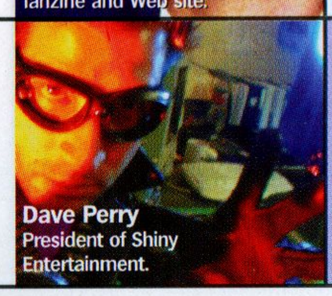


Sony's PopEgg printer in all its free-range glory.

PHOTO: JAMES HACKER

5x5

Every issue, we ask five pressing questions to five interesting people who should know the answers. This month: Retro videogames.

	Why should today's PS2 gamers be interested in old videogames such as *Pac-Man* or *Speedball*?	What elements make a 'classic' videogame?	Are 'updates' of retro games a cheap and unimaginative way for publishers to squeeze profits out of old franchises?	Is there anything left to discover in games, or are innovations just restricted to improvement of graphics and sound?	Can you name one all-time classic videogame that is still worth playing today and tell us why?
 **Mike Montgomery** Managing Director of Bitmap Brothers.	Well, of course, gamers of today don't have to be interested in old videogames, but seeing as most PlayStation 2 gamers are of a different generation to some of us, it would be a shame that they didn't get to play the games that started the whole thing in the first place and understand how different the machines of the past were.	Gameplay, gameplay, gameplay. Most of the old classics have one thing in common – they gave hours of entertainment and were simple to pick up and play for hours.	Well, for some yes, but not for all. The Bitmap Brothers did *Speedball 2100* for the PSone just so that a new generation can play a classic game on the machine they have.	Yes. Gameplay is changing all the time and will continue to, but sadly the public would prefer realism over gameplay. Sometimes the best gameplay is like a comic rather than a flash car mag.	The sit down *Space Invaders*. Why? Because it's the game I have spent more hours playing than any other. Every time I play it, it brings back so many memories of the past, not only playing it but who I was with and the places we played. *The Bitmap Brothers are currently working on an unnamed PlayStation 2 title*
 **Steven Poole** Author of *Trigger Happy: The Inner Life of Videogames*	PS2 gamers who play some old videogame classics might get a better understanding of how much bad gameplay design is wallpapered over these days with flash eye candy. In the old days there was nowhere to hide.	Creative use of the available graphical capabilities, good sound design, an appropriate control interface and highly tuned gameplay.	Sure, nearly always. Trying to 'update' a 2D game to 3D is usually a waste of time, for very good gameplay reasons. But today's designers can certainly learn from the classics and apply those lessons to modern game styles.	People probably thought there was nothing left to discover in gameplay at the end of the Eighties. They would have been wrong. Advances in AI and especially interface design will undoubtedly create new gameplay forms in the future.	I still load up *Defender* on the *Williams Classics* disc for PSone now and again. It's a gloriously intense and stupidly fast blaster with excellent sonics, sizzlingly pretty lasers, scary mutant enemies, and masses of tactical possibility. It's a stairway to Zen gaming heaven when you're on form. Trigger Happy: The Inner Life of Videogames *is out now through Fourth Estate, priced £12*
 **Trip Hawkins** Chairman and CEO, The 3DO Company.	It's a matter of taste and history. Some of the old games have simple, classic gameplay mechanics that are to game design what *Gone With The Wind* is to film history. If you are all about graphics then you should get *Warriors of Might and Magic* for PS2 *(That's a 3DO plug, reader – Ed)* and get on with it!	Obviously, we had no graphics to speak of in those days, so what you are left with is the simple elegance of the mechanics. Design themes that really work, like 'scissors, paper, stone' and 'cat and mouse' have been repeated time and again over the years. A 'classic' game should represent one of the roots of gaming.	There's no point in being judgmental about people's tastes. If people want them, they will buy them – nobody is going to hold a gun to their head.	To paraphrase the academic Marshall McCluhan, 'The medium is the message.' Each new technology leap enables new genres and gameplay features. There is still much to be done.	I'm currently working on an extreme skiing game with Olympic Champion Jonny Moseley. It's déjà vu for me, since in 1983 I designed *One On One*, the first videogame to incorporate a celebrity. Another 'golden oldie' I love to play occasionally is *M.U.L.E.*, which I helped design with the late Dani Bunten. Heck, *Pong* and *Asteroids* are always fun. *3DO's* WDL Thunder Tanx *is out on PS2 in 2001*
 **Keith Ainsworth** Editor of *Retrogamer* fanzine and Web site.	Because the day after first playing your new PS2 games you won't really notice the graphics anymore. If the game isn't fun to play you'll never pick it up again. Classic games can't blind you with snazzy visuals. If it was crap it was quite obviously crap. Classics are cheap and great fun.	For me it is the early 'one screen' games: *Pac-Man, Frogger, Manic Miner.* Everything you need to know is right there in front of you on one screen. You know what to do – the fun is in trying to achieve it.	I'd say they have a head start because the updated games are based on proven themes. However it still takes development time and new ideas to expand it.	Never say never – but most so-called 'new' genres have precedents in the past. Many new players don't realise this. Just the other day I was looking through a 1982 computer catalogue and found a game that appears to be *Tetris*.	*Pac-Man*. The classic phrase is: 'Easy to learn, difficult to master'. With just one joystick no one was ever scared to try this game. The balance between defensive play and risk taking to score points is perfect. Pure thumb candy. Retrogamer *fanzine costs £1.50 an issue and can be ordered from www.retrogamer.co.uk*
 **Dave Perry** President of Shiny Entertainment.	Fresh new PS2 gamers are going to probably try and ignore what they see as the shitty old games of the past. They can try, but as we know, they will end up playing them on their cell phones, on their PDA's or MP3 devices or even wristwatches. There is no escape from the old games.	They are games that have stood the test of time for at least 5-7 years. They conjure a warm 'I used to play that' feeling without a blush of embarrassment immediately following. I also think the ones you personally call a classic, are the ones that you felt at the time you did pretty good on.	Absolutely. They are just milking the IP (intellectual property) for all it's worth. Welcome to capitalism in the videogame world – anyone for a massively multiplayer game of *Frogger 7*? You *know* it'll happen on a set-top box sometime in the future!	There is always new game ideas from people that are willing to take risks. Look at the risks we took making a game starring a baby or a worm. *Sacrifice* is our latest game and it crosses multiple genres trying to allure FPS [first-person shooter] gamers into an action real-time strategy game. It's risky, but it seems to be working.	I think the one that I remember was the original *Star Wars* full-size machine that you climbed inside. With its 3D vector graphics. I was Luke Skywalker (just a taller version). That said, after getting my arse kicked, it was a sad realization that there was no 'Force'. Thanks Atari for bursting that bubble. *Shiny is currently working on a top-secret PlayStation 2 project.*

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WORDS: SAM RICHARDS/ILLUSTRATION: WILL BARRAS/PHOTOGRAPHY: LOUISE BROOM

I'M WITH THE BAND

What is the Japanese attraction to Bemani, Konami's increasingly OTT series of music games?

Bemani is the name given to the family of musical 'rhythm-action' games invented by Konami's AM arcade division in 1997. Essentially a cool contemporary update of those Simon 'repeat-after-me' electronic toys which were ubiquitous in the early Eighties, every Bemani game involves responding to on-screen commands that scroll in time to the music. Hit the buttons in the right order at the right time, and you do well. Don't, and you fail. *Beatmania*, the first in the series, brought the concept into the modern era by shaping the controller like a DJ turntable and recruiting the finest in J-Pop talent to provide the tunes. The Japanese arcade-going public went insane for this genius new craze and soon the brilliantly skewed minds at Konami AM had invented a whole genre of extremely cool, music-based games.

Dance Dance Revolution was the next innovation, a giant arcade cabinet housing a touch-sensitive floor pad where players struggled to get jiggy with the sound of the moment. Then came *Guitar Freaks* (an axe-shaped controller attached to the cabinet), *Drum Mania* and *Keyboard Mania*. While other companies have leapt onto the Bemani bandwagon – notably Jaleco with *Dance Dance* clone *Stepping Selection* and deranged karaoke arcade game *Dream Audition*, featuring the song *Hide With Spread Beavers* – Konami is still keeping it most real.

The invasion of Bemani into the home followed hot on the heels of the genre's arcade popularity. Coupled with versions of the arcade peripherals produced by KCEJ West (also the home of *Metal Gear Solid*) *Beatmania* and *Dance Dance Revolution* have a near-permanent residency at the top of the Japanese charts, while *Guitar Freaks* and *Drum Mania* enjoy similar status. PS2 versions of the above have all performed well and the next game in the series for PS2 will combine *Guitar Freaks* and *Drum Mania*, allowing for a two-player game that will see Japan's gaming otaku thwacking plastic strings and skins in their front rooms. In the UK, PSone versions of *Beatmania* and *Dance Dance Revolution* will be followed by PS2 sequels in late 2001 but Konami says that prohibitive costs will prevent the other Bemani games from making the trip to the UK. For now, Bemani remains very much a Japanese cause, but with Konami Europe saying that a petition could get even *Keyboard Mania* a UK release, it appears PS2 has the power to change all that. Vive le rock. □

ON DRUMS
Drum Mania (Konami)
Japan-only PS2 launch game, featuring the most ludicrous controller yet.
¥13,900 (£87)

ON DECKS
Beatmania Featuring Dreams Come True (Konami)
A J-Pop update of the PSone classic. Expect a PS2 version for the UK, with a seven-button turntable controller.
¥7,800 (£49)

ON RHYTHM
Guitar Freaks (Konami)
PSone smash in Japan, no thanks to the on-screen tutor with a bag on his head.
¥7,800 (£49)

ON LEAD
Guitar Freaks 2nd Mix (Konami)
Just one of many updates of the PSone original. The PS2 version is exactly the same.
¥7,800 (£49)

ON KEYS
Keyboard Mania (Konami)
PS2 lunacy with such genres as 'AOR 'n' Bass' and 'Trenchcoat Jazz'. Us neither.
¥9,800 (£62)

ON VOX
Dream Audition (Jaleco)
Jap-only PS2 karaoke game. Jaleco's *Stepping Selection* is bound for PS2 in the UK. Could this follow suit?
¥8,900 (£56)

ON THE DANCEFLOOR
Dancing Stage Euro Mix (Konami)
A localised PSone version of the original *Dance Dance Revolution*. A PS2 version is planned for Japan and the UK.
£29.99 (Game)
£39.99 (Mat TBC)



With the news that *Guitar Freaks* and *Drum Mania* are set to link up, this could be the front room of the future. Mind that vase...

WORDS: STEVE MERRETT/PHOTOGRAPHY: MARTIN BURTON

RACE FOR THE PRIZE

Last issue, we showed how the once-renowned DiD has been reincarnated as *WRC 2001* developer, Evolution Studios. This month, we discover how SCEE's Studio Liverpool has risen from the ashes of Psygnosis with *Formula One 2001*.

Founded in the late Eighties, Psygnosis was always about finesse and forward thinking. Created by Jonathan Ellis and Ian Hetherington (now of Evolution Studios – see last issue) the team was perhaps more renowned for breathtaking graphics than the actual content of the games. During the company's first five years titles such as *Shadow of the Beast*, *Lemmings* and *Blood Money* for the Commodore Amiga consistently pushed back barriers and smashed supposed limitations, catching the eye of Sony as it pieced together a European launch for its then unnamed games console.

Psygnosis was then invited on board and enjoyed preferential treatment to develop on the top-secret project, giving them a valuable head start over rivals. However, it wasn't the extra time that worked in the team's favour, it was the way they bought into the console. While everyone else was porting over Super Nintendo or MegaDrive games, Psygnosis was creating certain turbo-charged futuristic racers with sublime control systems. Yes, *WipEout*.

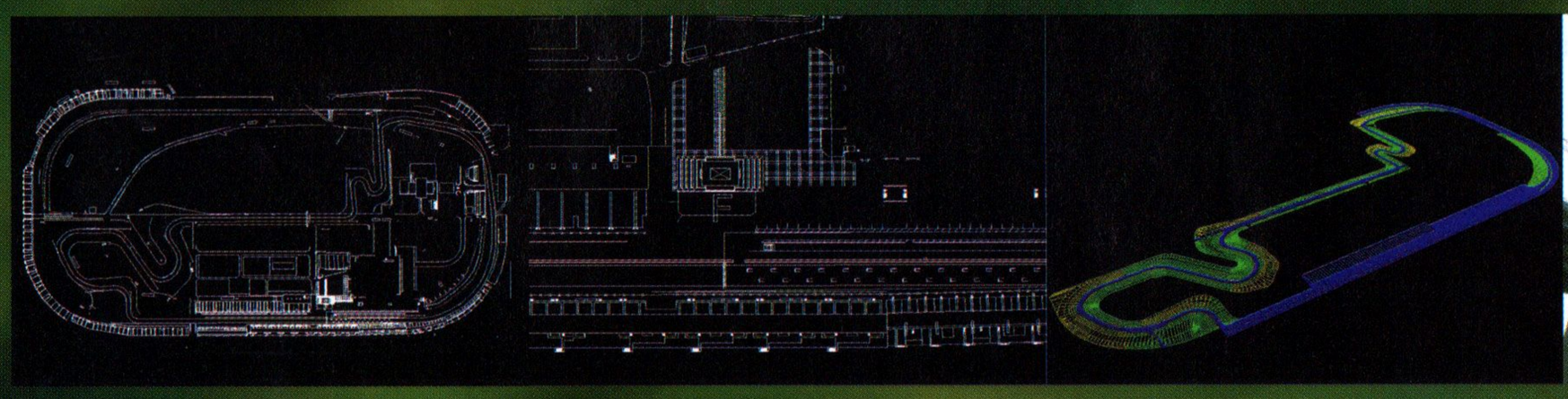
However, towards the end of the Psygnosis era, the studio spread itself too thinly and lost its reputation for quality over quantity. Poor or off-the-wall titles such as *Kingsley*, *Microcosm* and *Sentient* were becoming more and more common, while the firm's innovative stance was lost as barely enhanced *WipEout* sequels failed to sufficiently advance the series. Only the occasional highpoint emerged with the most notable being *Or Die Trying*, a name that neatly summed up Psygnosis's dogged attempts to hold on to its reputation. Then in February 1999 the developer became a subsidiary of SCEE and absorption to the company was finalised when it was renamed SCEE Studio Liverpool. With this new name came a new vision and the developer was back on the right track.

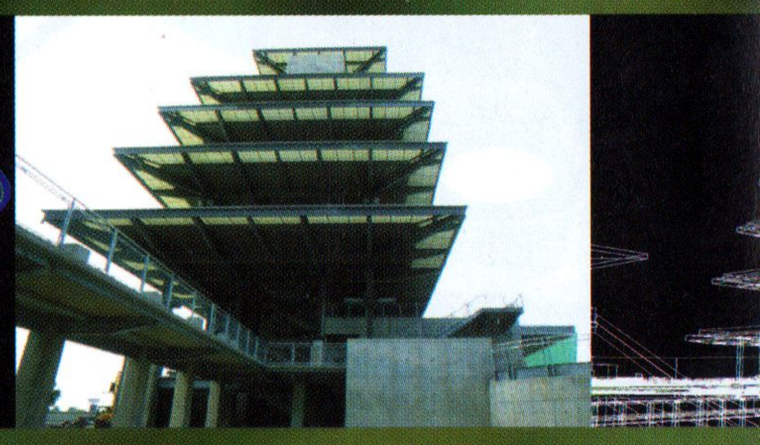
The team's original and innovative ethos that they had in their early years has now returned and is apparent as *OPS2* watches *Formula One 2001* – the first PS2 game to come out under the new label – being put through its paces in the developer's plush offices. The McClaren car that is burning around a stunning representation of the Monza circuit moves with all the grace and fragility of the real thing, while little touches such as reflective floorings in the pit lane and weather conditions that fade in and out are pure Psygnosis. With PlayStation 2, the studio's quest to marry stunning aesthetics to playable games has finally hit its stride and *Formula One 2001* marks a welcome return to form for the fallen giant.

SPIT AND POLISH

Whether *Formula One 2001* is the giant step forward F1 fans were hoping for it remains to be seen, it nevertheless has all the polish of a race day event. Similarly, the car handling is just the right side of sensitive and precise, but without the lightweight feeling that past F1 titles have endured.

A lot of this can be attributed to the team. Led by Producer, Ken Barlow, the assorted members of the *Formula One 2001* team have lived and breathed tarmac, revving engines and Murray Walker







FORMULA ONE 2001

for over a year now, working and reworking a game engine almost as intricate as the one beneath the chassis of a Williams car. "Our aim with *Formula One 2001* was a simple one: to make a great game," says Barlow. "We have tried to focus on the game's handling and on the AI, with the key aim being to develop a racing system that makes you genuinely feel as if you are racing against skilled drivers. From these integral areas, we can then build upon them to create a game with stunning dynamics that can be enjoyed by the 'pick up and play' casual gamer, but also lets us create a true simulation of the F1 experience for the more ardent fan."

With full PS2 development kits only emerging last year, the decision to concentrate on the AI was borne of necessity. Barlow and an initial team of ten started work on a PC to establish what they wanted from the opposing drivers. "With the development kits here, we've been working hard on the PlayStation 2 game since April, although still largely on the AI," Barlow continues. "Once we got the kits in and we knew what was available we rapidly started to expand what we wanted to add to the game. For example, we now have a stunning visual appearance where dust clouds are kicked up when the player skids off the track – and are even differently coloured based on the exact kinds of gravel used across the different circuits. We've also got real-time dynamic weather conditions that change during the course of a race. But the beauty of this is that it's not just a graphical effect. Rain will affect the handling of the car by giving less grip on the tyres, adding a strategic element meaning players can enter the pits and change them for wet weather ones. We've also got a great damage system in there, too, with wheels coming off, wings torn off and snapped nose cones preventing the player from continuing."

It is these kind of features that proves *Formula One 2001* is a Psygnosis game through and through. Classic Psygnosis games, such as *Lemmings*, *WipEout* and *Destruction Derby* have all been built around one or two key aspects – whether it is immediacy, slick control or intelligent AI – with additional layers added only to enhance a basically strong core. When first taking its cars around the track, it just looks like a decent F1 racer. The low slung in-car camera is buffeted as the vehicle whizzes along the straight, while cornering and overtaking are elegant and realistic.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

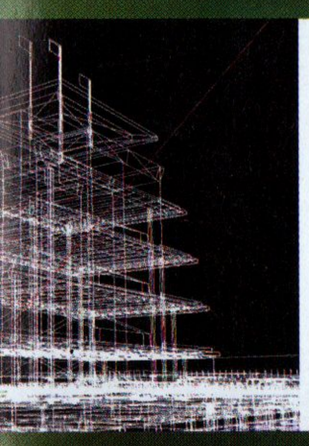
Beyond the graphical frills, those aforementioned additional layers soon become noticeable. Opposing racers are fallible and are as prone to spinning off a wet track as you are, while cars driven by lesser-known racers are as hesitant to take risks as their real-life counterparts. Then there's the minutia: the reflective surfaces on passing buildings, the shrieking crowds and Murray Walker's enthusiastic commentary. "But all these things are a part of F1 and should be in there," says Barlow. "It may seem like a lot of effort, but all our cars handle differently as we have implemented exact engine routines for each. And if we're going to do that, then we also have to have the differing engine sounds, too; after all a Jordan sounds nothing like an Arrows or Ferrari car."

If this level of detail sounds superfluous, then spare a thought for the dozen or so artists preparing the many buildings, trees and

THE TRACKS

***Formula One 2001*'s 17 courses:**

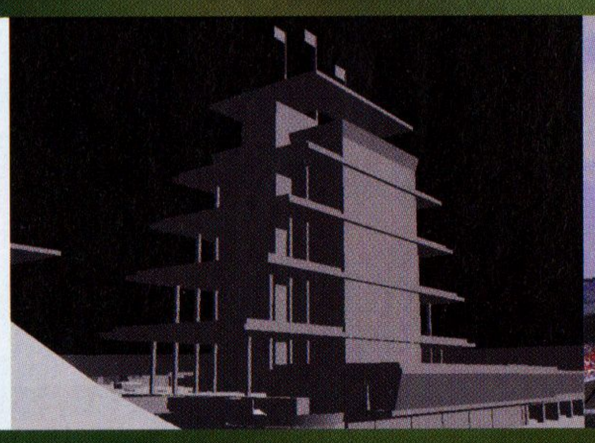
Australia, Melbourne
Brazil, Interlagos
San Marino, Imola
Great Britain, Silverstone
Spain, Barcelona
European GP, Nurburgring
Monaco, Monte Carlo
Canada, Montreal
France, Magny Cours
Austria, A-1 Ring
Germany, Hockenheim
Hungary, Hungaroring
Belgium, Spa
Italy, Monza
US, Indianapolis
Japan, Suzuka
Malaysia, Sepang

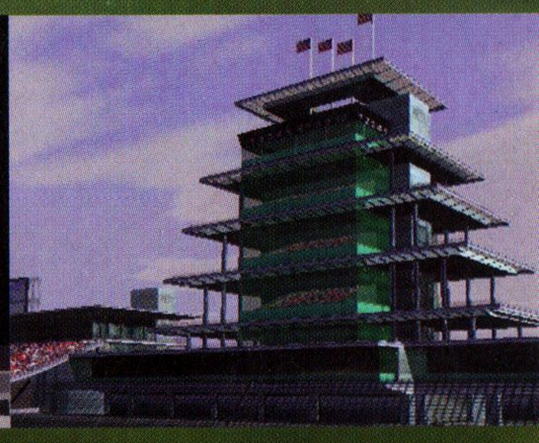


BUILDING BLOCKS

Creation of circuit a from start to finish...

1. The FOM supplies a DXF sketch of the track, detailing the shape and scale of the course, obstacles and the position of surrounding buildings.
2. Key areas are then zoomed in on for further inspection. In this case, the Indianapolis Pagoda building (left).
3. The team now concentrates on the actual track. A 3D model is made with a colour-coded system used to detail tarmac, grass and gravel areas. These will also be linked to relevant sound effects in the final game.
4. Background detail is added to the course map. Over 1,100 photographs and 112 hours of video footage were used as reference in the game.
5. A wireframe drawing of every building is crafted from photographs.
6. A rough, shaded texture is added to the buildings, creating flat edges. Which are painted individually with brick patterns, while windows and metal work are also added where necessary.
7. The buildings are now ready to be placed on the tracks to finish the game.





Pit crews have always burdened F1 games. Could this be a change in fortune?





Ken Barlow, producer of *Formula One 2001* has high hopes for this realistic racer.

pit lanes for each of the courses. Overseeing the procedure is lead artist Andrew Phelan. "Because of our deal with the Formula One Management (FOM) we are given extensive research materials for each of the courses which are recreated as a basic 2D line drawing of the circuit in question," he explains. "Although basic, it contains all the essential information, such as scale and the height of surrounding buildings. We can then zoom in and out to highlight key areas of interest."

This intricate process builds up each area as a wireframe construct, which are then colour coded. "When the wireframe is complete, we'll start dropping pointers for the detail that will be used later: blue for tarmac, yellow for gravel, green for the grass verges, and so on. Now we're ready to add the detail." Using extensive site photographs for reference, buildings are created using a mix of 3D modelling and plain old hard work. Walls are drawn and coloured, glass added (complete with reflections) and even the advertising hoardings are as they should be – although the ones for cigarettes have been dropped on SCEE's request. This move merely pre-empted the FOM's decision to no longer carry this kind of advertising.

While the backdrops are impressive it has to be said that a lot of the scenic effect is likely to go unnoticed – with the cars deservedly taking centre stage. Each has been created from detailed data supplied by the FOM, but again it is the studio's obsession with detail that expands on this. Yes, the cars look and sound great, but there's more to it than that. It's the way they behave. How many racing games have you played where you easily sail pass a rival competitor or where they actually move to let you pass? "Real F1 just isn't like that," states Martin Harrow, Assistant Producer. "These drivers are basically out to win and nothing is going to stop them. Too many racing games are busy concentrating on nice touches and forget the competitive nature of the sport. Our racers have all been designed to react realistically to different situations."

Harrow displays this by whizzing around the Indianapolis circuit, hot on the heels of the game's race leader, Michael Schumacher. "Our drivers follow the best possible racing line and have been designed to consider the available path ahead," he says, edging nearer to the Ferrari as a smattering of rain starts to fall on the circuit. "For example, if a car is approaching a corner and there is another ahead, our driver AI will check the distance between the opposing car and the verge and make a decision based on the circumstances. Schumacher, for example, will take more risks as he is a more skilled driver, while others will hang back and wait for a better opportunity to arise." At this point, as Martin tries to overtake the game's Schumacher, the German counters by cutting across his path. "Oh yeah," Harrow smiles, "and our racers will also try to stop you overtaking…"

//Our aim with *Formula One 2001* was a simple one: to make it a great game//

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS...

You may not notice them, but it's the details that make a game good.

1. Degradable tyres: They actually lose grip as the race progresses.
2. Wing mirrors: See Schumacher come up from behind.
3. Full pit crew: Change to wet weather tyres when necessary.
4. Realistic damage: A dented chassis affects the car's handling.
5. Changing weather: Clouds gather and it starts to rain.
6. Safety car: Warns of accidents.
7. Camera views: You can flick to the other cars.
8. Driver AI: They even weave to stop being overtaken.
9. Murray's commentary: Restrained (well, ish) but excellent.
10. Tyre damage: Bits of grass even stick to them.



The *Formula One 98* flag may be old, but the passion is still there. Martin Harrow, Assistant Producer (far right), is a happy man.

FORMULA ONE 2001

Breathtaking weather effects, brilliantly animated pit crews and bone breaking damage. Just some of the many ingredients required for a successful F1 game.









Although it does indeed feature the most realistic looking circuits of any F1 title; it is the fact that the game can be tailored to suit any taste that will win it the most fans. A simple menu system allows users to switch different elements on or off. Manual or automatic gears can be selected, a helpful racing line can be summoned to show the best way around the track, while the sensitivity of the steering can be altered to taste. Thus, *Formula One 2001* can, as with producer Barlow's promise, be enjoyed at all levels and will truly grow with the player. Its obvious limitations as an arcade racer can be rectified on selecting a full season, while growing confidence and regular pole position slots can be tempered by selecting a new skill to add to your roster. "Basically, it can be any game you want it to be," concludes producer Barlow. "We're hoping that the Arcade mode will ease the player in to the game, but as they get better so they will unlock different control elements and thus start to enjoy a lot of the hard work that we have put in to it."

Formula One 2001 was originally planned as a launch title, but will now rev up for a March release, giving the team more time to implement the current season's racers, course additions and team data. This slight delay may give EA's *F1 Racing Championship Season* and Video System's similarly titled *F1 World Racing Championship* a slight head start, but SCEE's Studio Liverpool game could just roar past them early next year if early demos of the game are anything to go by. It may not have Psygnosis behind the wheel, but it has the same pit crew and, in the world of Formula One and PlayStation 2, that's what counts. □

PSYGNOSIS: THE HIGHS AND LOWS

In its heyday Psygnosis was responsible for some definitive PSone titles. At its lowest ebb they produced some less memorable fare.

HIGHS:

WipEout
Stunning 3D racer that replaced cars with sci-fi hovercraft things. Fast and with a subtle yet effective control system, it was one of the key titles to accompany the PlayStation at launch. Now *WipEout Fusion* is set to do the same for PlayStation 2 this March.

Destruction Derby
Essentially a very simplistic driving game, *Destruction Derby* was nevertheless successful as it allowed you to smash up cars in spectacular crashes. Best of all was the 'Bowl' mode where everyone piled in for a 'last one standing' tournament.

Formula One 97
Graphically excellent and with Murray Walker firing on all cylinders, subsequent updates never attained this standard. A PS2 version is rumoured.

LOWS:

Microcosm
One of the earliest Psygnosis titles and easily the worst. Basically, as the PlayStation streamed video footage of a load of organic backdrops, a dire psuedo-3D shooter was overlaid on top. Shockingly bad.

Chronicles of the Sword
Symptomatic of a lot of Psygnosis's weaker titles, *Chronicles of the Sword* was a pretty but shallow game. Impressive Arthurian architecture made it look good; appalling adventure elements killed it.

Psybadek
A wretched futuristic take on snowboarding, *Psybadek* thought it was too cool for its own good and somewhere along the line forgot the gameplay. Another example of aesthetics over content.

In the crime world, burning your bridges is probably a good idea.

WORDS: SAM RICHARDS/PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDY MCANDLISH

LARCENY IN NYC

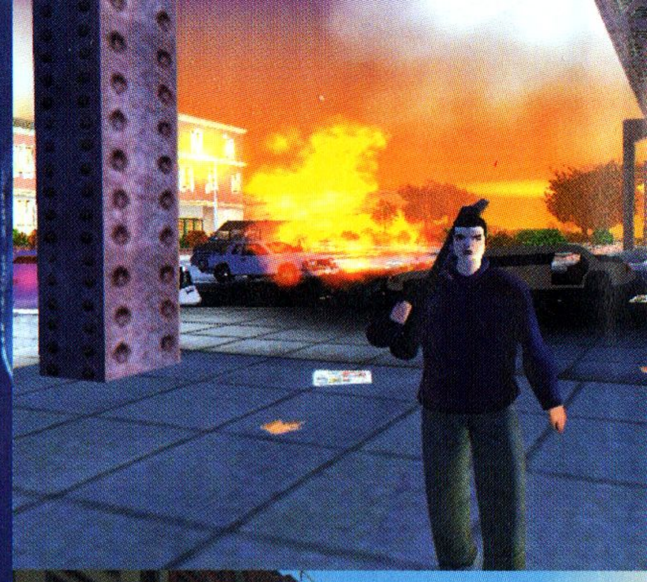
It's back. The car-jacking, cop-baiting cartoon romp through the crime-ridden city that is *Grand Theft Auto* returns in glorious 3D. After the retro top-down view of the first two outings, *GTA3* hotwires PlayStation 2 and finally realises the series' full potential.

You're a nobody. A nothing. A loser. Recently cast out of the penitentiary, you're still dressed in prison garb, grubby from dossing on the street. Your life's a mess. All you have left is your ability to break into parked cars in less than five seconds and your failure to give a shit about the consequences. And that, my crime-minded friend, is all you need to make it in this city. See that villa out on the island, driveway lined with palms? Paid for entirely by drug-running and extortion. In a year's time, that villa and its tasteless extravagant marble lions could be yours. Now, drag an innocent driver out from behind the wheel of his Dodge, step on the pedal, and let's make a rep.

This is a scenario you will be familiar with. It's the beginning of classic PSone game *Grand Theft Auto*, a wholly irresponsible title which encouraged you to make your name by nicking motors and running errands for a variety of mob villains until you became a mob villain yourself. *Grand Theft Auto 2* was no more civil in its intentions, populating the urban jungle with vicious rival gangs and putting ever more weapons at your disposal.

In *Grand Theft Auto 3*, the aims remain the same. You start out as a fall guy for small-time pimps, but by successfully completing your missions, foxing the cops, and callously robbing and murdering your way around the 'hood, you'll soon be mixing with Mr Big. The freedom of the first two games – which allowed you to take on missions at your

Left to right: Rockstar's Dan Houser, DMA Studio Manager Andy Semple, Development Manager Leslie Benzies and Level Designer James Worrall.



These might be work-in-progress screenshots, but *Grand Theft Auto 3* already looks impressive.











leisure, simply stealing cars for fun or even picking up taxi fares for cash – is still in place. In fact, *Grand Theft Auto 3* will arguably boast an even greater variety of routes to the top of the crime tree, with one crucial advantage: the whole world is in three dimensions. It's like *Driver* meets *Crazy Taxi* meets *Urban Chaos* meets *Kingpin*, in downtown Manhattan, smoking a big fat Cuban cigar.

//The plot is essential since you help create it. It's an ambient story. It's in the player's hands//

MENACE TO SOCIETY

Grand Theft Auto was released on PSone in 1997. It was incredibly successful and profited from a typhoon of negative publicity which centred around the anti-social aspects of car-jacking, joyriding and mowing down innocent pedestrians – questions were even asked in the House of Lords, by the morally outraged Lord Campbell of Croy. Luckily, gamers were able to distinguish between committing these acts in the context of a cartoonish videogame and committing them in real life and *Grand Theft Auto* is now regarded as a seminal title.

The game was also the inspiration for the founding of Take 2/BMG offshoot Rockstar Games, established by the Houser brothers in order to offer a more radical approach to games publishing. Dan Houser, Rockstar's self-proclaimed 'man of many titles', was still at BMG Interactive when he first saw the potential of *Grand Theft Auto*. "Although graphically primitive compared to other games at the time, I was seduced by the non-linearity of it, the freedom and the anarchic nature of the game. I liked the way the game played on a humorous British interpretation of America. The public were happy to be sold on the fact that it was games over graphics. They could see the enjoyment of driving wildly, the fun of car-jacking, the thrill of just wrecking stuff."

Back in 1997, there really was nothing like *Grand Theft Auto* around. It's difficult to conceive now, but games in which you played a bad guy were scarce, and games set in contemporary urban environments were scarcer. Its legacy has been immense.

"*Grand Theft Auto* opened up a market for urban, crime-based, gangster games," Houser states unequivocally. "Everything from *Driver* to *Kingpin* has been directly influenced by *GTA*."

Take 2 now owns DMA Design outright and *Grand Theft Auto* remains Rockstar's most important brand. Essentially, the genius of *GTA* is what has kept both Rockstar and DMA going through the release of some rather underwhelming products over the last couple of years. It's true that *Grand Theft Auto 2* may not have sold as well as hoped but, Houser concedes, "it didn't have any single feature that blew people away, it lacked the 'wow' factor of the first game". Nevertheless, it ensured that *Grand Theft Auto* remained in the public eye and the newly streamlined DMA operation is now fully focussed on *Grand Theft Auto 3* – a game whose expansive 3D world will certainly prompt more than a few 'wows' on first glance.

A BITE OF THE BIG APPLE

Development Manager Leslie Benzies takes up the story. "We received our PlayStation 2 dev kits in February. Thankfully the machine lived up to our expectations. It has always been our intention to make *Grand Theft Auto* in 3D right from the beginning and PS2 has enabled us to fulfil our dream. We want to retain all the elements that made *Grand Theft Auto* great and 3D is the only logical next step."

The idea being that anyone familiar with the first two games will instantly be able to pick up and play *Grand Theft Auto*. A single button press allows you to haul the driver of a nearby car out of his seat, thus taking his place behind the wheel. Any vehicle you see you can drive. Any location you see you can drive to. "The aim is to set you loose in the world," says Houser.

This world being Liberty City. Looking at the map that has been drawn of the entire game area, it's obvious that New York is the model. The player begins in an area that could be Brooklyn or Queens, crosses a wide river to reach the central island (a shape suspiciously similar to Manhattan) and eventually makes it over to the mainland doing a pretty good impression of New Jersey. Apart from the filmic connotations of the city, the geographical layout of the Big Apple makes it an ideal template for Liberty City.

"In terms of game design, it's perfect," says Houser, a resident of Manhattan's Chelsea district himself. "We don't have to construct artificial borders, it's an island."

The first area (Brooklyn/Queens) will be largely industrial, the second (Manhattan) commercial and the third (New Jersey) will be mainly suburban. They'll be linked together by bridges, tunnels, train lines and ferries – of which more later. Micro-communities exist within each area, much like the real-life New York City, so that glamour is separated from squalor by only a few blocks. The desire to provide a variety of environments is emphasised by the inclusion of overhead trains as seen in Chicago, a Chinatown district as seen in Soho and docks as seen in Hoboken via *On The Waterfront*.

HISTORY OF DMA

From *Lemmings* to *Gran Theft Auto 3*, the games of DMA explained

1987 DMA Design formed in Dundee by Dave Jones, who remains company chief until 1999.

1991 *Lemmings* is published by Psygnosis across all formats of the time. The ingeniously quirky puzzler is a huge hit.

1993 *Hired Guns* released for Commodore, Amiga & PC.

1997 DMA Design sold to Gremlin plc. The ownership wrangles begin just as DMA enters its most productive period.

1998 Take 2/BMG release *Grand Theft Auto* on PC and PSone. The landmark title remains in the charts for the next two years. Odd cartoon adventure *Space Station Silicon Valley* and *Body Harvest* (via Gremlin) are released for the Nintendo 64. Despite critical praise, these games fail to mirror the success of *GTA*.

1999 *Wild Metal Country* released through Gremlin for the PC. Infogrames acquires Gremlin and looks to sell off DMA Design. In September, Take 2 buys DMA Design for $1, assuming $12.3 million of debt. The Rockstar label is created by Take 2 specifically to publish DMA games and *GTA2* is released for the PC and PlayStation in October. Despite this apparent upturn, Dave Jones decides to leave in order to establish Game Boy development studio Denki.

2000 The newly streamlined DMA Design operation relocates from Dundee to the more cultured surroundings of Edinburgh and concentrates all of its efforts on *Grand Theft Auto 3*. The future looks rosy.

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

//The aim will be to collect every car in the game, just like Nic Cage and cronies in *Gone In 60 Seconds*//

Each neighbourhood naturally has its own colourful community consisting of tramps, whores, pimps, street gangs and innocent pedestrians (or peds) taking the dog for a stroll. Their advanced AI is such that they will continue to go about their business even if you're not around. The development team reckon they can capably display up to 20 people on screen at any one time, although the peds scarper as soon as you start driving up the pavement or opening fire into crowds.

As for the characters of the game – the dodgy dealers you need to interact with in order to obtain work or complete missions – you'll be mixing with all kinds of crooks and psychos. Don't expect lengthy cut-scenes or a convoluted back story, though. Level Designer James Worrell explains the need to keep it simple. "If you look at a game like *Driver*, it was essentially just motoring from A to B. The plot was superficial and you ended up skipping cut-scenes to get to the next bit of gameplay. In *Grand Theft Auto* the plot is essential since you help create it. The manner in which you get from one location to another is entirely up to you, as long as you meet your contact at the agreed time to complete the given mission. To this end, we didn't want to give any of the characters much of a history in case their stories began to impinge on the player's freedom. They are all easily identifiable physically, stereotypical almost, and you have to make a few quick judgements about how useful they are to you."

With regard to which characters we will encounter, Houser tells us, "Some of the popular characters such as Bubba and Brother Marcus from the first game will be returning, as will characters from *GTA: London*. They will appear alongside the gangs from *GTA2* because we now have room to include them all."

Worrall concludes, "If you get in with the Mafia crowd, at first you'll meet Luigi who runs a brothel and Joey who owns the garage where he soups up cars for jobs, but further up the ladder you'll be mixing with Frankie, the local kingpin. And this is before you've even reached the second area of the map."

WHAT TIME IS IT, SUCKAS?

In the previous *GTA* games, you were only aware of a timer in the corner of the screen counting down the seconds until you failed the mission. *Grand Theft Auto 3* makes use of a neat, quasi-real-time clock which runs through 24 hours of game time in about 30 minutes.

Benzies elaborates: "As well as providing a greater sense of immersion, it's useful for setting mission times. Say you're planning a truck heist. You know the truck passes through your territory at a certain time and if you miss it, you have to wait until the following day."

This device allows for some superb graphical effects as the end of each day is marked by an impressive sunset and a misty twilight – as long as the realistic weather generator concurs. The onset of darkness is generally the cue for the lowlife to crawl slowly out of their dens and *Grand Theft Auto 3* is no different.

"Some gangs will only meet in darkness," explains Houser. "The city is almost an entirely different place during the night. The time and the weather, they seem like minor touches but they've actually been implemented in such a way that they affect the decisions you take in the game."

The game's title implies that it's all about car theft and the development team are keen to stress that the emphasis of *Grand Theft Auto* remains in the fun be had when car-jacking a nice motor, cornering it recklessly until it's knackered, dumping it in the middle of street, and stealing a new model. The car-jacking animation was one of the first completed by the team and it's been polished to the point where if you jump an American car from the right side, you'll automatically slide across the seats to get behind the wheel.

"The 40 vehicles in the game all handle differently," claims Benzies. "Obviously the fast sports cars are rare, especially in the first industrial area. With a truck you can ram-raid or force other cars out of the way. Conversely, there will be areas of the map you can only access with a small car."

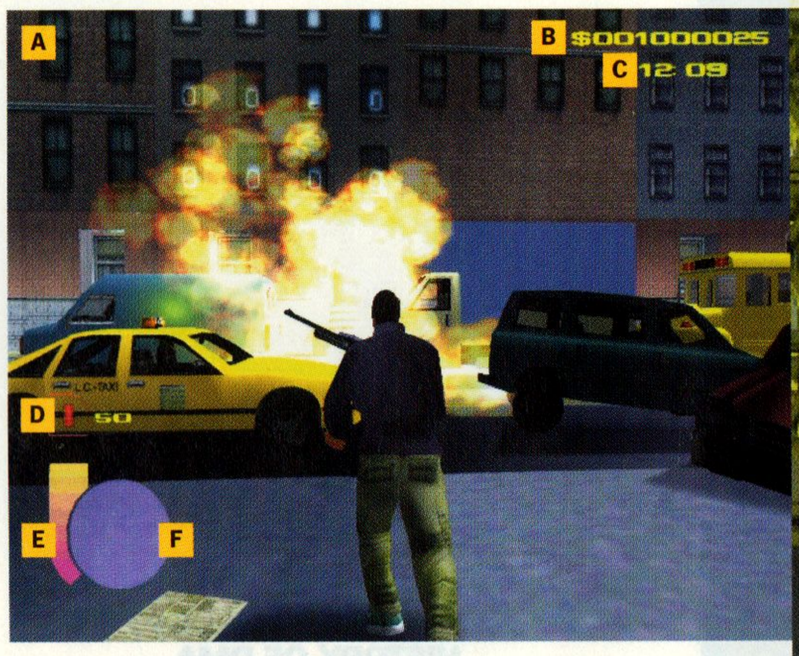
Obviously no car manufacturers would ever license their precious creations for use in such a destructive game as *Grand Theft Auto*, but all the fictional models included boast their own loveable personality. This includes a radio pretuned to a station which suits the type of vehicle being driven, but with the cute comedic ditties of the first game replaced with tunes by name artists. Don't bet against Rob Playford's Resonant Matrix crew getting involved again. In each area of the game, there'll be ample opportunity to find yourself a warehouse base where you can dump the vehicles you've stolen – the aim will be to eventually collect every car in the game, just like Nic Cage and cronies in *Gone In 60 Seconds*.

The transition from 2D to 3D has necessitated a lesson in true driving physics for the team. The need for broadly realistic but enjoyable vehicle handling is crucial to the game's appeal, but Benzies appreciates the importance of this aspect and believes they've already

Liberty City is made up of three districts: industrial, commercial and suburban.

WORD ON THE STREET

How to use the info provided to get around in Liberty City.



A. WANTED LEVEL
Your 'wanted level' will appear here on a rating of 1-6, depending on the nature of your crimes.

B. CASH
Getting dead presidents – it's what you're here for.

C. CLOCK
Always know what time it is.

D. WEAPONS
Shows you what you're packing and how many bullets are left.

E. HEALTH
You're not invincible, and trips to the hospital should be avoided.

F. RADAR
Finding your way to the rendezvous point, *TimeSplitters*-style.



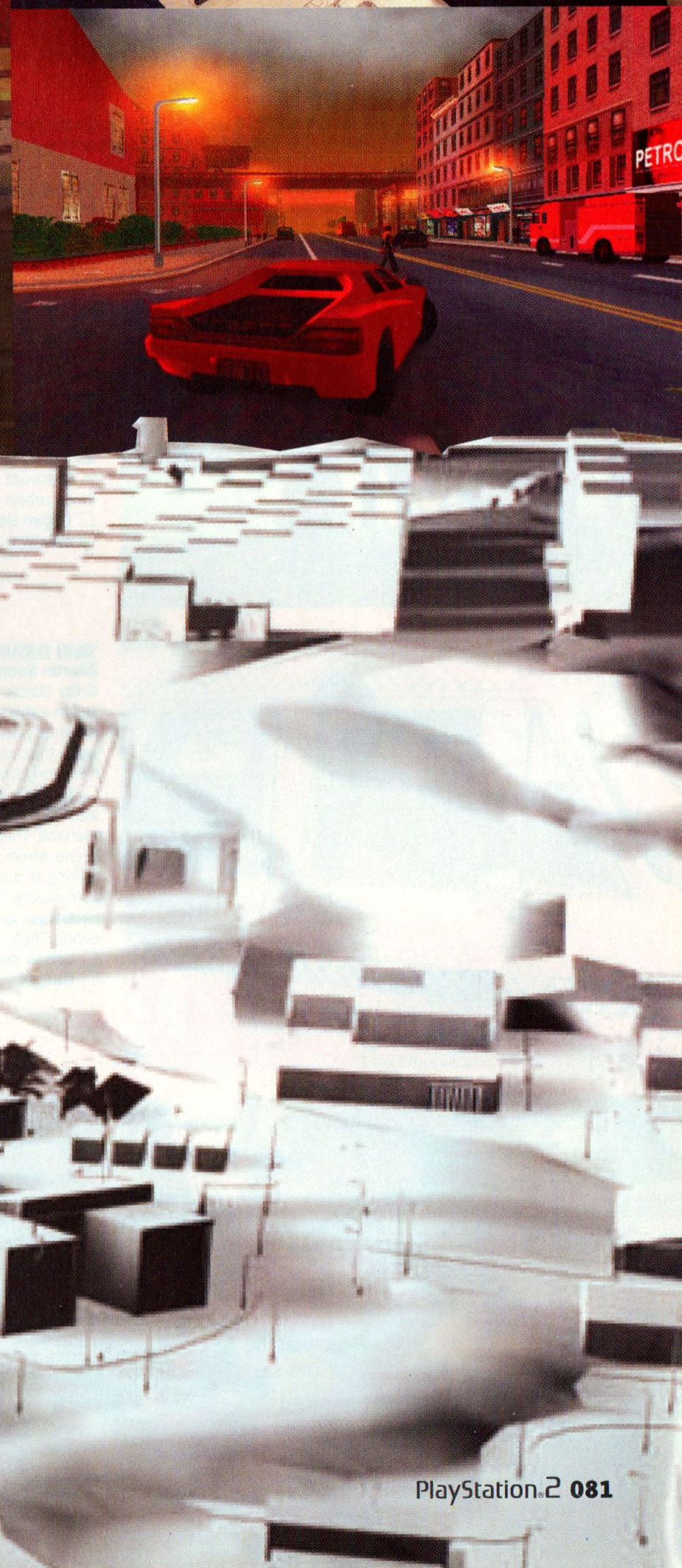






One mission requires you to climb the crane and pop heads with the sniper rifle.



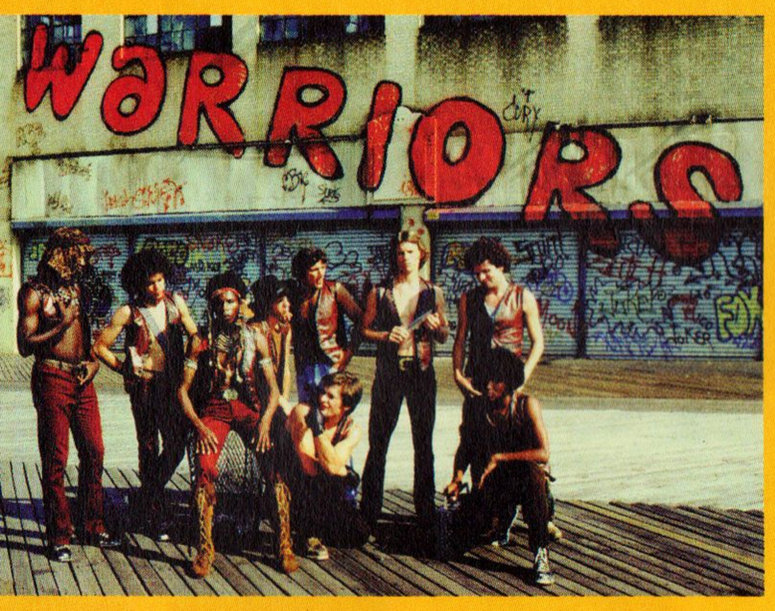


The Warriors is a favourite film of the development team – here you can make like the Baseball Furies gang.

PHOTOS: KOBAL COLLECTION

BIG-SCREEN BURGLARY

Here's what DMA Design and the *Grand Theft Auto* team have stolen from celluloid in order to construct their 3D Liberty City and the story which propels the game forward.



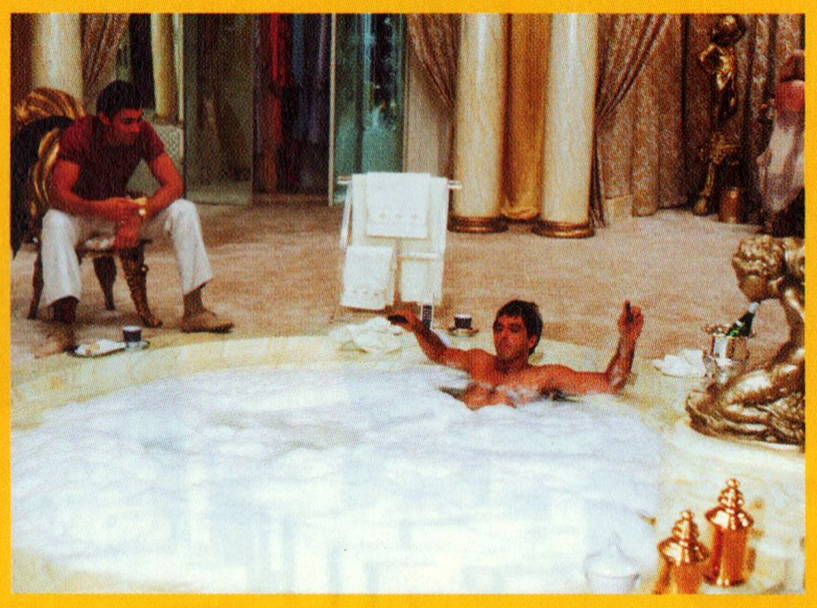
THE WARRIORS
(Walter Hill, 1979)

Shoddy-but-compelling adventure which follows a Coney Island street gang on their trek home through hostile territory from a meet in the Bronx. Can you dig it?

☐ **Houser:** "This was one of our favourites during the making of *GTA2*. It was a great inspiration when creating the various street gangs, and it's also good for reference on how to construct really seedy, run-down urban areas."

☐ **Urban decay:** 8/10

☐ **Gangsta cred:** 6/10



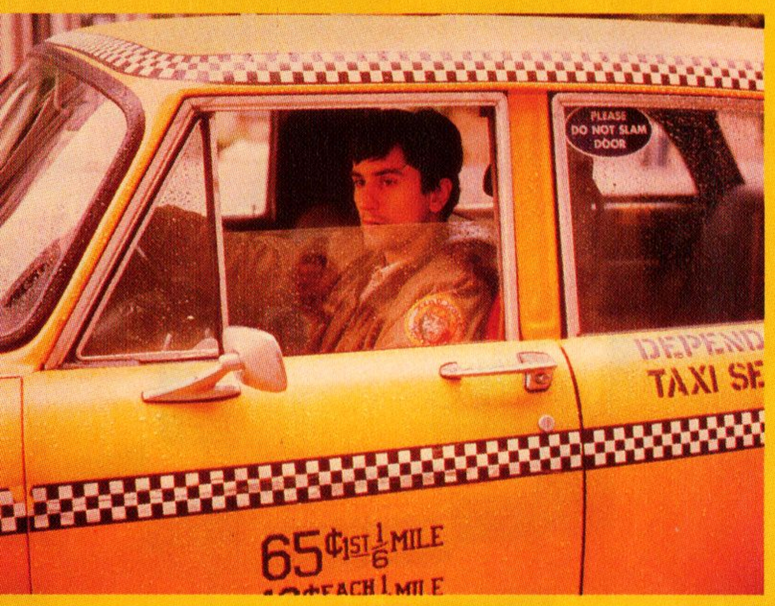
SCARFACE
(Brian De Palma, 1983)

Pacino stars as Cuban immigrant Tony Montana who fashions himself a Florida crime empire before bowing out in a fury of bullets and coke dust.

☐ **Worrell:** "We've studied *Scarface* from a storyline point of view. Tony arrives in the US and does whatever he can to climb the scuzzball ladder to become the kingpin. That's exactly the aim of *Grand Theft Auto 3* and I think a similar degree of nastiness is involved in both scenarios."

☐ **Urban decay:** 5/10

☐ **Gangsta cred:** 9/10



TAXI DRIVER
(Martin Scorcese, 1976)

Gritty classic in which De Niro's sullen cabbie chooses a violently unorthodox method to wash the scum from the seedy New York streets.

☐ **Houser:** "This is obviously an ideal film for detailing urban menace. There's that great scene where Scorcese himself is ranting in the back of the cab. He's exactly the kind of passenger you could pick up in *Grand Theft Auto 3*."

☐ **Urban decay:** 9/10

☐ **Gangsta cred:** 5/10



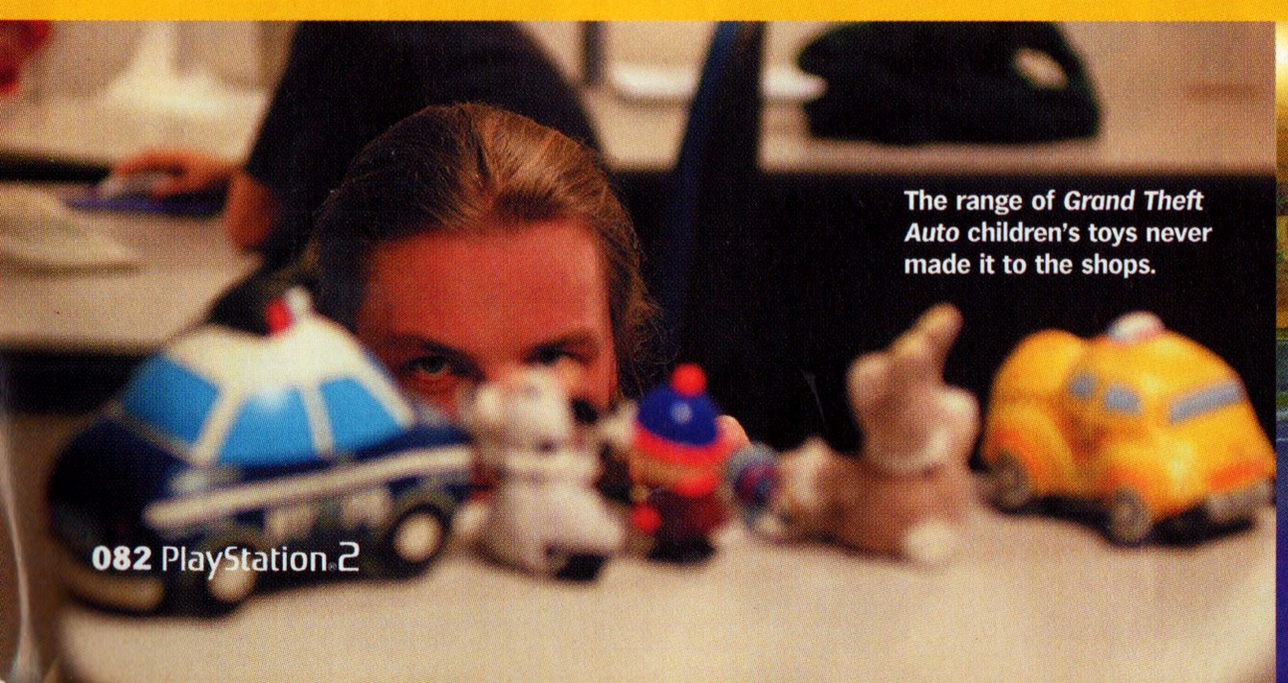
PAYBACK
(Brian Helgeland, 1999)

Mel Gibson plays the anti-hero of this recent Hollywood effort who takes on 'The Syndicate' in an attempt to get what he's owed by fair means or foul.

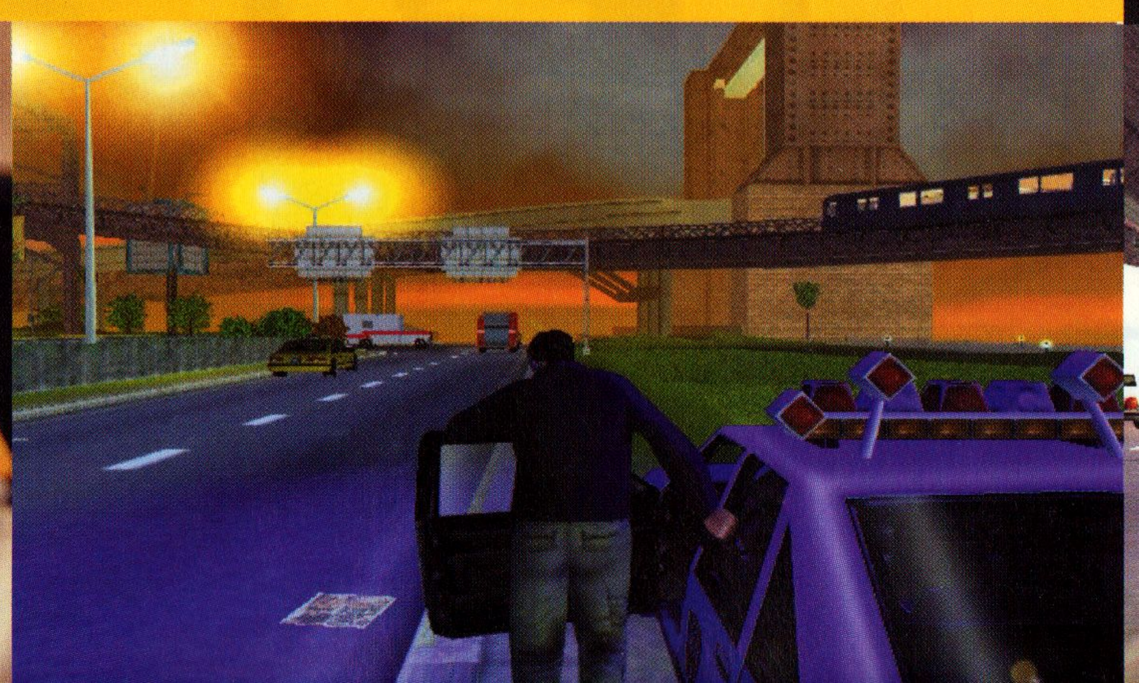
☐ **Worrell:** "This is another great film about a character hauling himself out of the gutter – in this case he's been left for dead but returns seeking revenge."

☐ **Urban decay:** 5/10

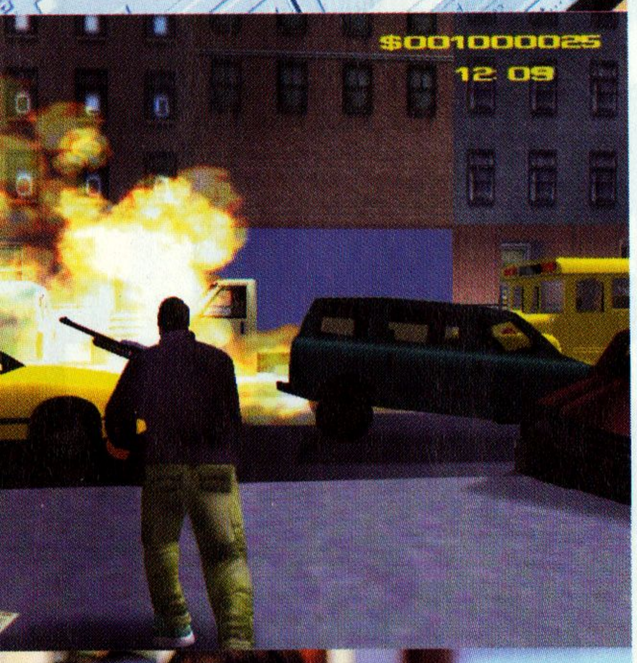
☐ **Gangsta cred:** 7/10



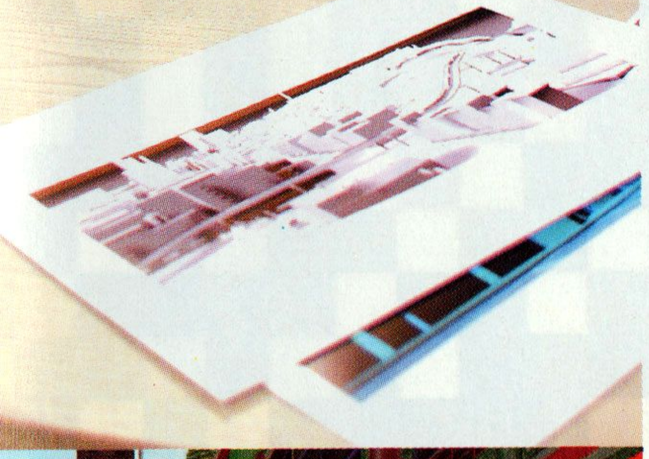
The range of *Grand Theft Auto* children's toys never made it to the shops.

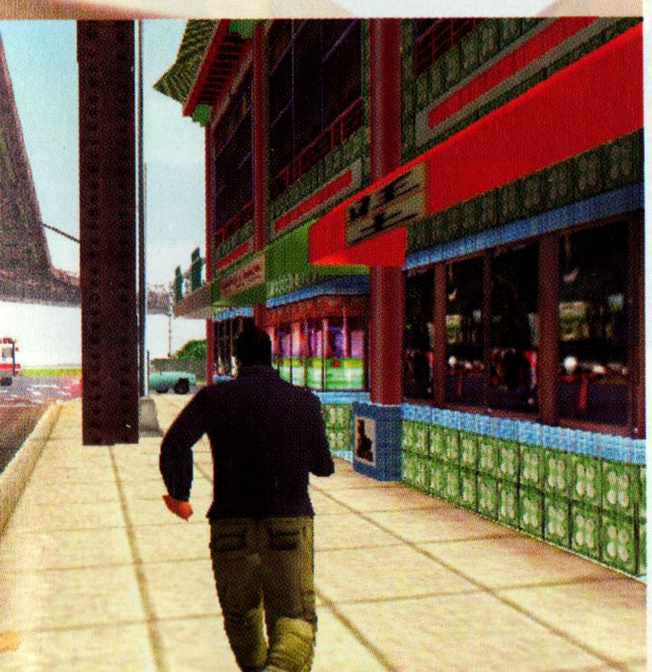












got it sussed. "We've spent a lot of time working on real car physics and accurate handling, but then we've tweaked the models to make sure the vehicles are fun to drive. It's difficult to up-end your car, but when you do it's probably time to steal a new one. There are 18 damage panels, sections will fall off, and eventually the vehicles will explode." If you're still dopily perched behind the wheel at this point, you'll find yourself waking up in the hospital with all your money and weapons confiscated.

//GTA3 may be amoral, but not immoral. We want to give players the sense of being in an action movie//

Naturally there are times in the game when progress on foot is the most convenient way forward. You can walk, run or sprint, although after a few hundred meters of the latter you'll have to stop for a breather. No doubt you'll be taking the opportunity of a bit of fresh air to gun down a few rival mob lords. A range of weapons are available, from your common-or-garden pistol to the shotgun (always found in cop cars) to the sniper rifle which commands its own special zoom mode. Again, the third-person mechanics and targeting system are new concepts for the DMA team to wrestle with.

"We've played a lot of games to see how other developers have implemented a third-person camera and shooting system," admits Benzies. "It's one of the toughest challenges of development, but we're confident. At the moment you can lock your target on the most dangerous enemy and then scroll through the various foes surrounding you, or just shoot straight ahead at everything in your path."

However, Houser points out, "We can't make the shooting elements too hard to play because the overall strategy of the mission is more important. We want to give the player the feeling of an action hero, the way that Steven Seagal strolls through a crowd of enemies and suddenly everyone's dead."

Striking an enjoyable balance is the holy grail of games development and Worrall believes this has been achieved, "*Grand Theft Auto 3* is not realistic. You have to be able to get away scot-free with horrific crimes. You've got to know the street, you can't be stupid, but you don't have to plan with military precision." Although, says Houser, "There are going to be areas where you learn not to shoot people in the street because it's crawling with plain-clothes cops, or areas where you can't go round stealing the best-looking cars because they all belong to the local gang bosses."

A LOOK BACK IN TIME

When *OPS2* first sees the game in action, Benzies plays a sneaky trick. Loading up the PlayStation 2 development unit, a top-down view of a car appears, which Benzies proceeds to drive around in a manner rather too similar to the PSone *GTA* games for comfort. A pang of doubt strikes. Did we get the wrong end of the stick here? Did we traipse all the way up to Edinburgh for nothing? Then, with the touch of a button, the camera impressively zooms in and swings around to reveal a full three-dimensional world.

The fact that you can play *Grand Theft Auto 3* in nostalgic top-down mode if you so desire is just one of the many clever touches which amuse and reward the player who spends time with the game. Already the basic gameplay functions of *Grand Theft Auto 3* are solid, demonstrated by the fact that the entirety of the industrial area is already crudely playable. The title is not slated for release until October which leaves plenty of time to work on the kind of detail that makes a game great. "We're aiming to provide hundreds of little touches to keep the player amused," continues Benzies. "This is all coming together now the AI of the peds is being finalised. My favourite moment is when you become the victim of a car-jack yourself by another in-game character."

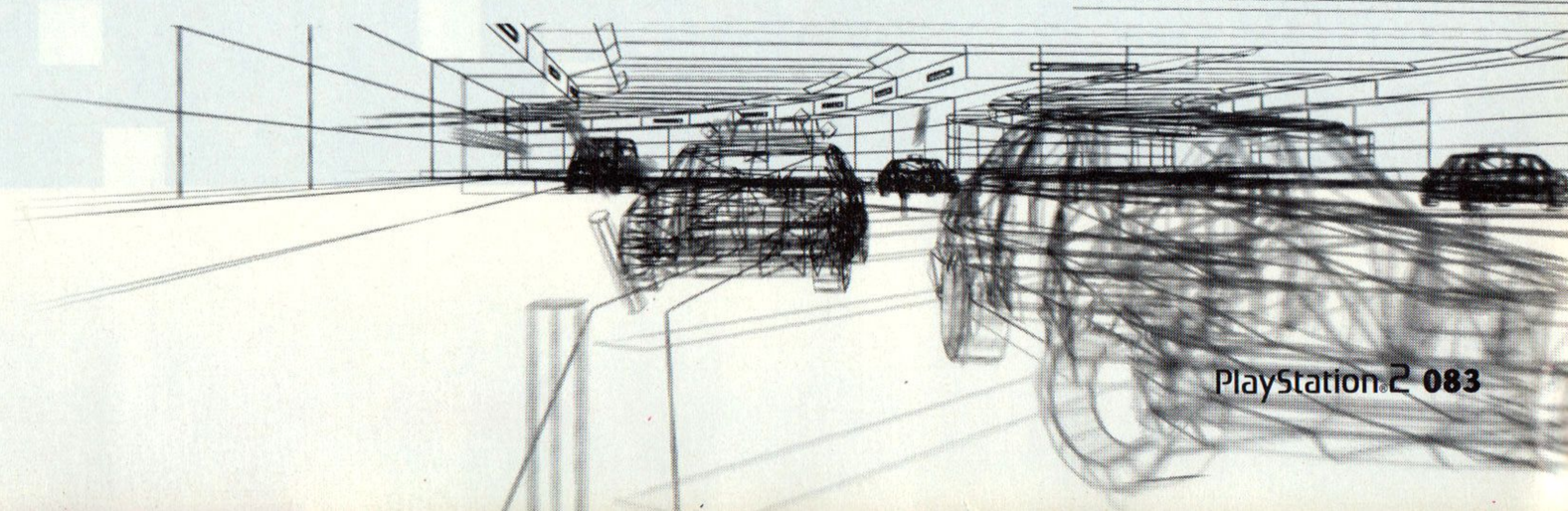
From the ability to ride trains, steal speedboats and board the ferry between islands to the enemy-specific insult button, *Grand Theft Auto 3* will give you plenty to discover. And every one has their favourite part, "I like the bit when your guy crawls out the window of the car after you've rolled it," enthuses Houser. "These hundreds of little incidents weave together into a seamless whole."

Worrall is also excited by the fact that, "The complexity of ped behaviour means that you don't tend to repeat yourself. You won't ever go down the same street and see the same thing happening."

As for the potential controversy of a title in which thieving, mugging, drug-dealing, pimping and hitting adversaries with a baseball bat take centre stage, the team hopes not to be making an appearance on *Newsnight* this time around. This is an adult game, meant for adults.

"We don't feel the game is immoral," shrugs Houser. "It may be amoral, but not immoral. We're not setting out to encourage kids to steal cars, we want to give players the sense of being in an action movie. It's an 18-rated game. It's meant to be hardcore."

Grand Theft Auto 3. In 3D. On PS2. You know the score. □



WORDS: PAUL RIGBY

PLAY AS YOU GO

WAP technology hints at exciting future prospects for the mobile phone and PlayStation 2. *OPS2* looks at how videogames are on the move.



The new face of mobile gaming – a colour WAP version of John Cord from Revolution's popular PSone adventure *In Cold Blood*.

As 2001 rears its futuristic head, it's now impossible to escape the recent onslaught of new communication developments. The Internet, email, palmtops, consoles, MP3... It's difficult to imagine a time before they existed – or, more importantly, what we did without them. Yet none has yet captured the imagination of the public as much as the mobile phone.

One of the biggest media hypes in terms of the mobile generation in the last two years has involved just three letters – WAP. As with all innovations, WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) has been the subject of a lot of confusion and misplaced claims. What does it really offer?

WAP is a universal standard which enables you to easily access information services and applications through your mobile phone in a similar way to accessing the Internet via the World Wide Web using a standard computer. So you can send/receive emails, read the news, check TV/movies schedules, access travel and leisure info... the list goes on. However, access to the Web is not as it would be on a PC, for example. WAP sites are a much scaled-down version of many of the popular sites. But while the Web has been welcomed into the world of WAP, the videogame industry has remained largely untouched – until now, that is.

Games on mobile phones are not a new concept. Many a bored exec has frittered away hours on a train playing *Snake*, while the more mentally stimulating *Memory* and *Logic* can also sap battery power. Currently WAP games accessed via your mobile phone service provider are still relatively bland, consisting of black-and-white, dotty images viewed on a tiny display – but that never bothered *Tetris* fans glued to their old Game Boys. Things, however, are changing. The next generation of WAP games are being developed by people that produce games for PSone and PlayStation 2. Getting as much potential out of a piece of code is second nature to them.

RINGING THE CHANGES

Graham Stafford, head of publishing/mobile entertainment at Nokia Internet Communications, told *OPS2* that the company is producing between 50 to 60 products either in-house or in conjunction with third parties. "We recently announced a deal with Oxford Software for a number of board games," he confirmed. "We also have the wireless-online rights to 12 Infocom text adventures (including *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*) and a deal with Net Entertainment for a number of gambling games."

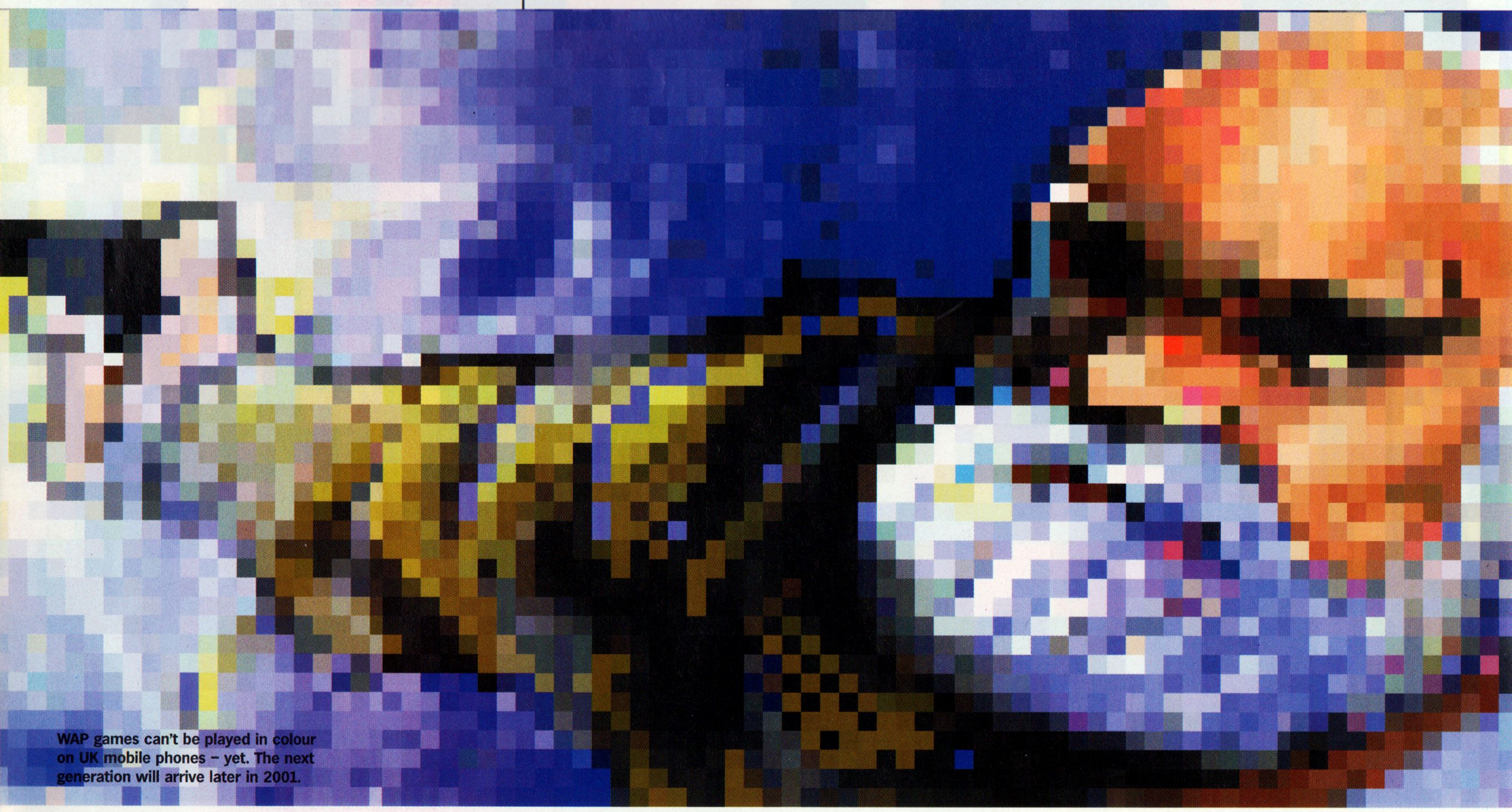
Network provider Orange is ensuring it is involved from the outset too. "We are in negotiations with many top mobile game developers and publishers," says Kamar Shah, the company's Games Marketing Manager. "One of them being Rage Software (developer of PS2 racer *Wild Wild Racing*), which is developing an exclusive WAP game for us called *Airlock*." Phone manufacturer Motorola is also active in game development. The company has recently hired Juan Montes, former Vice President of Software Development at SCEE, for its interactive division.

Noticing the huge potential of the portable platform, many external developers are producing a wide array of software. For example, Ludiwap (a subsidiary of Ubi Soft) is to release its PSone thriller, *In Cold Blood*, jointly on PC and



Popular with Japanese PocketStation users, a third version of Japanese PSone game *Dokodemo Hamster* is due to be released on iMode.

//WAP gives you mobility. Coupled with SMS or WAP Push. This gives designers an amazing new gameplay tool//



WAP games can't be played in colour on UK mobile phones – yet. The next generation will arrive later in 2001.

as a WAP game. Thorsten Burkard, Ludiwap's Gamemaster, has also announced that its next big release will be a WAP game called *Signal Failure* – a parody of London Tube travel. The game involves making an important rail connection, arranging an appointment, and finally going on a hot date. How this compares to the real thing remains to be seen.

nGame has also launched titles, including *Alien Fish Exchange*, in which you have to breed alien fish then sell them to restaurants for vast amounts of money, and *DataClash*, which involves you hacking into other players' networks for notoriety (see 'WAP To The Future' on page 88). Other games such as *Chop Suey Kung Fu* (a 2D beat-'em-up) and a version of the retro-friendly *Dragon's Lair* are on the cards. Richard Owen, Marketing Manager of nGame, has announced that it is producing a WAP version of the *Gangsters* licence for Eidos. In a similar way to the 1998 PC version, players will trade alcohol and weapons to assert their supremacy in America's Prohibition era, but this time players will face human opponents instead of battling it out with a computer.

TECHNICAL LIMITATIONS

On paper WAP seems to herald a new era of gaming. However, it's also the source of a few initial disappointments, even for Eidos. Andrew Brennand, Eidos's Producer for what's intriguingly known as 'Emerging Platforms' gave his opinion on the present state of WAP games. "Most of what's out there now is pretty awful, but then you could say the same of some of the games released at the launch of the PS2. Just wait six months for the games currently under development to make their way to the market place, and then judge.

"Why did we not have *Gran Turismo* back in 1995 when the original PlayStation launched? Because developers were learning about the platform and how to push it to its full capabilities. We will see the same with PS2 – software will be more compelling with time."

Part of the problem is that a game designer has to work within some pretty severe technical limitations. It's like working on the old 8 bit games again, learning how to squeeze as many bytes into a small piece of memory. Orange's Kamar Shah again: "WAP gives you one thing extra – mobility. You can carry it around with you at all times. Coupled with SMS [Short Message Service to annoy your mates during play] or WAP Push [where information is given to you when something interesting happens in the game]. This gives games designers an amazing new gameplay tool."

So what sort of games can we expect to see on WAP? Crawfish's Director Of Development, Mike Merren, is clear about what will and won't work. "The best games are turn-based – something you do on screen is then relayed to a central database were your turn is played out and an update sent back to you. But you can adapt this type of play to fighting games, board games and strategy games. The biggest positive is that a product can be developed for WAP incredibly quickly. The biggest negative? Well, you aren't going to see *Metal Gear Solid 2* on the system."

On that basis, Rage has an ideal project on the cards – a game called *Internet Football Club*. This virtual-based football management game gives you full control of a virtual football team and enables you to compete against other human players, explains Rage's Head Of Communications, Glen O'Connell. The company is currently looking at predominantly multiplayer and multiple platform games, whereby WAP is simply one of the technologies you use to view and play the game. "We did start off doing WAP-only concepts but didn't feel the market was sophisticated enough yet," says O'Connell. "We see

→

WHAT IS 3G?

Another confusing term explained...

3G is an evolution to a long-term communications ideal that we can only really speculate about at the moment. What we do know is that 'mobile multimedia' will hit the Japanese markets in 2001 and Europe and North America will follow soon after in 2002.

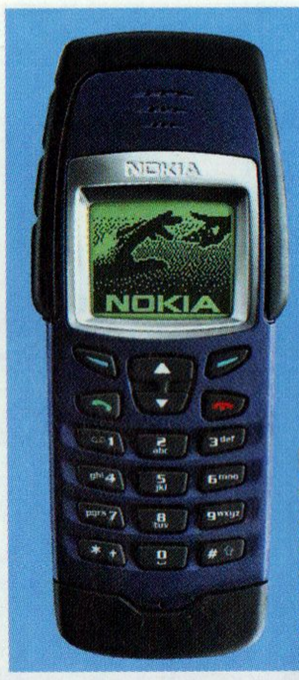
☐ **3G will allow you to:**

- Simultaneously talk to your mates via a video phone while you're in a taxi, one of your mates is in bed and a third is on holiday in France.
- Watch clips from your favourite soap on the train.
- Send images of your latest gaming victories (when you should be paying attention to the Maths teacher) to friends attending different schools and colleges, for the purpose of analysis and... envy.
- Share your holiday of Outer Mongolia with your friends – from Outer Mongolia.

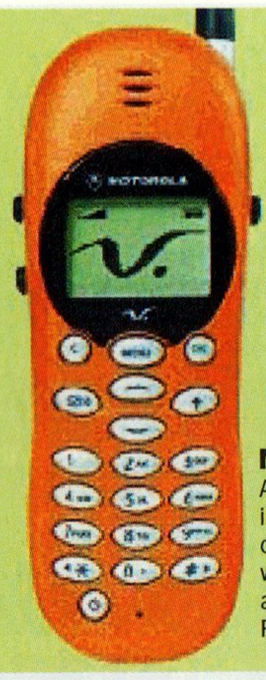
Just imagine having a combined camera, videocamera, computer, stereo, radio and games console included in your mobile phone. That is 3G.

WAP PHONE TO BUY?

They're starting to flood the market and there's no escaping the WAP phone onslaught.



NOKIA 6250
Designed with tough working environments in mind, the Nokia 6250 has been constructed out of sturdy materials, featuring external and internal protection against shock, water and dust. Perfect for gaming on the beach or for when you throw the phone through a window in frustration.



MOTOROLA V2288
Apart from a large screen for improved gaming visuals, it also comes with a stereo FM Radio, which you can listen to through a stereo accessory headset. Rock 'n' roll then lock 'n' load.



ERICSSON R320S
Big screen offering five lines of text and it's bundled with two games, *Tetris* and *Solitaire*.



MOTOROLA P7389 TIMEPORT
Features a large Optimax high contrast display, making gaming easy in all lights.



NOKIA 9110i COMMUNICATOR
Looks more like a palmtop. The great thing about this model is the large screen inside – ideal for gamers.

real value in combining a range of platforms to enhance the gaming experience."

THE PS2 CONNECTION

Which is where the PlayStation 2 comes in. Because, of course, the future of gaming is not just mobile gaming via WAP, but the ability to play games and move between platforms too. In Japan, for example, there will be a cable to link PSone (and PS2) to the forthcoming NTT DoCoMo i-Mode wireless service mobile phones. Check out the picture of a mock-up of *Dokodemo Hamster* (page 86), a Japanese PSone game, the third version of which will be released on i-Mode. Furthermore, it has been speculated that Sony Japan is working with Palm Inc parent 3COM to develop a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) which will work in tandem with PS2. Sony's UK-based Director Of Technology, Paul Holman, takes up the i-Mode story.

"The idea will be to allow new forms of entertainment for both PSone, PS2 and on the phone – perhaps using the mobile phone as a simple modem but, more interestingly, to allow part of the PlayStation game to be taken away and played on the phone, in a similar way to the PocketStation." This would add a number of interesting elements to PS2 gameplaying. You could send a friend your latest level design of *TimeSplitters* or a replay of a stunning goal in *FIFA 2001*. Or you could download up-to-date sports statistics and schedules to your sports sims. Unfortunately, we are unlikely to have access to this technology until the end of 2001. At the moment, your basic WAP phone is a 2G device (G stands for 'Generation'), i-Mode is a 2.5G device. You have to think in 'G' from this point forward.

Nokia's Graham Stafford explains, "The next huge shift will be WAP over a GPRS [General Packets Radio System] – a 2.5G system. Two things will happen with 2.5G. First, the connection will be quicker. Second, when you connect to the server with GPRS you don't connect to the network – you already are part of the network. So, if you play *Chess* with someone over GPRS, instead of being connected all the time, you only send the information you need to send in little packets – just a few bytes." So, it's more efficient and quicker, which means you can do more with it such as introduce colour, more features and, of course, it helps reduce your phone bill (see 'What Is 3G?' on the previous page to see what 2002 holds in store).

So the future for your mobile looks bright. Not only will it revolutionise gaming both on and off the PlayStation 2 but, according to some pundits, your entire life. And hey, a little hyperbole never hurt anyone. As a measure of its potential, look at how Western society as a whole has already been affected by the simple mobile phone.

"WAP is the first step in a long ladder for wireless gaming and simply a bridge to the 3G devices we will have access to from 2002 onwards," thinks Rage's O'Connell. "However, what WAP does right now is educate people to the fact that a mobile phone isn't just for voice calls. If you see the amount of people using SMS technology – and bear in mind that this is an inferior technology to WAP – then you'll realise that mobile phones, as they exist today, are ever changing. In the future, a mobile phone or other handheld platform will simply be a wireless device that is connected to the Internet, much like your machines at home will also be." The future is bright. □



It's not *Tekken 4* but *Chop Suey Kung Fu* points to a bright future for mobile gaming.

// WAP is the first step in a long ladder for wireless gaming and a bridge to the 3G devices we will have access to from 2002//

WAP TO THE FUTURE

Some are bizarre, others are downright weird, check out what games will be gracing mobiles of 2001.

1 GANGSTERS
nGame
A trading game in which you attempt to make a fortune and assert your supremacy in Prohibition-era America. Based on a popular PC title.

2 CHOP SUEY KUNG FU
nGame
2D beat-'em-up.

3 WAP BOXING
Firesoft
See through the boxer's eyes as your man fights against a 'phone'-controlled opponent.

4 IN COLD BLOOD
Ludiwap
Action thriller. Based on hit PSone game.

5 WAP DUNGEON 3D
Firesoft
A first-person perspective, fantasy role-playing game.

6 MERCHANT PRINCES
nGame
Trade goods in a simulation of medieval Europe.

7 TOWERS OF HANOI
Firesoft
A puzzle in which a tower formed by disks stacked on a peg must be transferred to another peg.

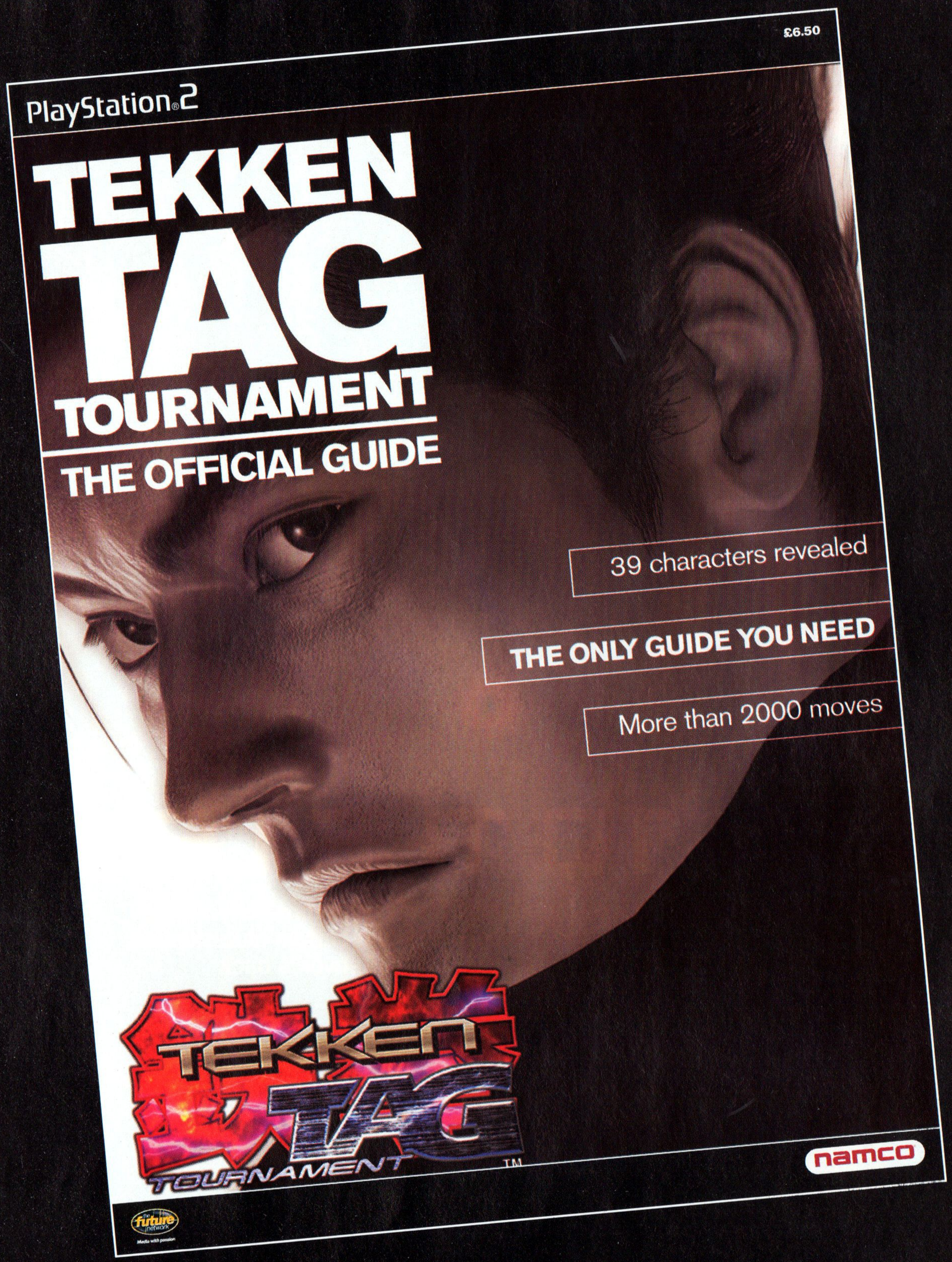
8 INTERNET FOOTBALL CLUB
Rage
A virtual-based football management game.

9 SIGNAL FAILURE
Ludiwap
A parody on London Underground travel.

10 ALIEN FISH EXCHANGE
nGame
Manage and breed a tank of alien aquatic creatures, that are apparently very tasty, then sell them to restaurants.

11 DATACLASH
nGame
A cyberpunk combat game where players try to 'hack' the others on the network to gain notoriety.





Get ready to fight!

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"But first on Earth, as Vampyre sent, thy corpse shall from its tomb be rent.
Then ghastly haunt thy native place and suck the blood of all thy race..."
***The Giaour* (1813), Lord Byron**

WORDS: BEN LAWRENCE/PHOTOGRAPHY: ELENA DORFMAN

RETURN TO THE LAND OF

As a new moon rises over the gaming world, undead hands crawl from beneath the soil. There is unfinished business to be settled in Nosgoth, and a certain blue-skinned vampire is here to finish what started many years ago... *Soul Reaver* is back

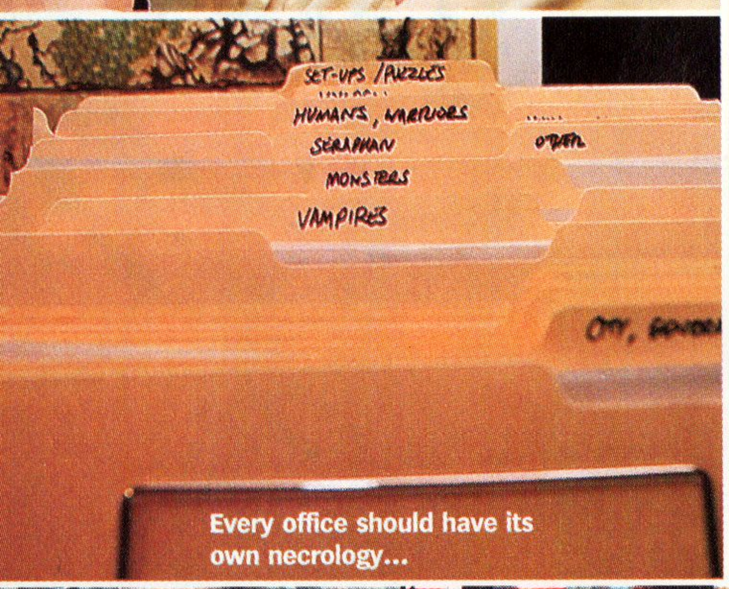
Through crimson skies the monster soared, roaring and tearing up clouds like thin ribbons of flesh. It flew away from the setting sun, into the night and back to its cursed land. A land crawling with corruption, evil and twisted denizens of the dark, where it could rest before the sun began to rise again. It was a Boeing 747 and its destination was America, land of the free and 'well fed'. San Francisco, home of Crystal Dynamics, was the final destination of the plane's occupants. A 50-minute carriage ride through mountainous terrain finally terminated in a leafy suburb on the outskirts of the misty city. The doors to its office heave open with a dull, heavy moan and we enter, hearts aflutter and burning torches quivering in the shadows. Verily, 'tis good, this horror lark.

Surprisingly, for a company dealing with the dead, day in day out, behind the clean glass structure of their offices the chaps at Crystal are a relatively normal bunch. Apart from the one developer who has turned his portion of the office into a candle-lit cavern adorned with animal skulls, wears a skirt and has barcode tattooed on his arm. They are also extremely affable considering we're three hours late, and as they skulk from the shadows and thirstily sniff at our necks we feel quite at home. We are here to bear witness to the conclusion of a cliff hanger.

Two years ago, in the wastes of Nosgoth, a battle took place between two vampires. Kain, leader of the undead and ruler of Nosgoth, was being hunted by one of his brethren. A vampire named Raziel had evolved into something more powerful. Raziel was adorned with thick, leathery wings and for the crime of evolution was cast into the vortex by his master. Stripped of his flesh and soul, Raziel spent an eternity in the vortex before his vengeful quest

THE DAMNED





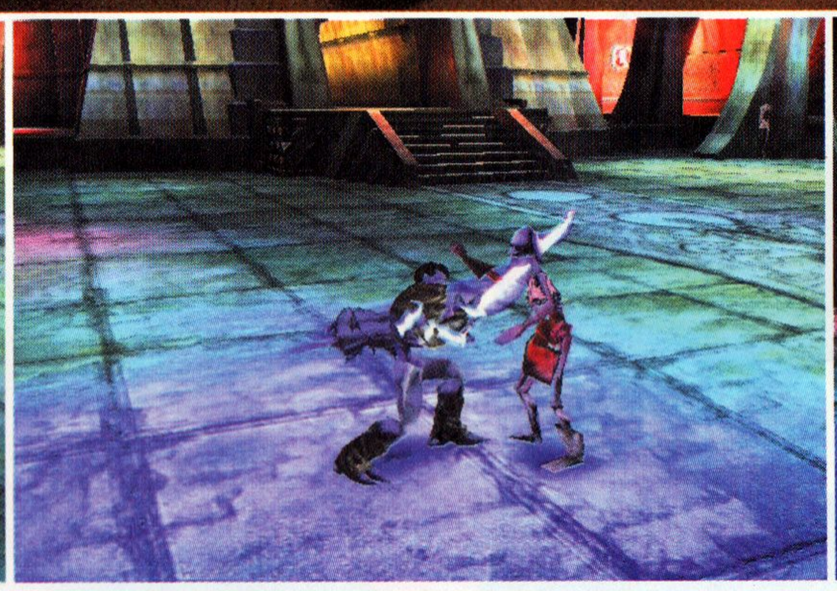
Every office should have its own necrology...



ALMOST NORMAL
Look what we found...

Thought we were kidding when we said we entered the Crystal Dynamics building with a degree of trepidation? Well take a look at this lot. This guy, let's call him 'Bob' for safety's sake, had decorated his 'design cube' top to bottom with icons of modern horror films, skulls and jars of human flesh. Creepy, creepy little man.









Soul-purging and combat still play an important role in *SR2*, with even more battles to be fought than before.

took us through the corroded carcass of Nosgoth, through its valleys, through its broken spires and husked churches until he could at last confront Kain. Slipping through a time portal, though, the cowardly vamp simply disappeared.

And that's how it was left. The game ended and PSones were turned off. Gamers demanded an explanation but none was given. "To be continued…", followed by a series of tantalising screenshots from the now-cancelled PSone sequel, was all the avid gamer was rewarded with. Now, after an agonising two years, *Soul Reaver 2* enters the PS2 stage to clear a few things up.

TALES OF THE UNDEAD

Raziel has followed Kain back through time, to an age when Nosgoth was still green, when the sun still shone through the clouds and the sky wasn't blackened and dead, a time when Kain hadn't even been born. Then we are transported years into the future when Kain is about to be given the choice to walk the earth again as the undead, after being savagely murdered. Then, like some snaggletoothed Dr Who, Raziel leaps forward to a time when Kain's reign is growing and humans are fleeing to fortified cities as the heart of Nosgoth begins to decay.

Amy Hennig, director of both *Soul Reaver* and *SR2*, was more than happy to explain why *Soul Reaver 2* is the game with which we can give Raziel closure. "We'll see him travel back through time to uncover his true destiny, one that Kain is all too aware of. He will find that his quest for single-minded revenge has far greater implications for the well-being of Nosgoth, and its ultimate demise, than he could have possibly imagined." Intriguing. When we ask whether Raziel's time travel actually triggered the downfall of Nosgoth, Hennig's otherwise accommodating mouth snapped shut like a mantrap. Could it be we had hit upon something?

Quickly changing the subject, she's eager to point out that the sequel is far more than just off-cuts from the first game (after all, the material that was cut would have amounted to only one decent-sized level). *Soul Reaver 2* now places heavy emphasis on the Soul Reaver itself, the symbiotic wraith blade attached to Raziel's arm.

Originally the game was about self-discovery, about learning to use your body, and was focused on revenge. This time, because Raziel already has all his faculties (apart from that whole 'breathing/living' thing) he must master the Soul Reaver, and its significance in the sequel is paramount. There are seven forges in which you can dip the Reaver – dark, light, air, water, earth, fire and spirit – and each of these bubbling cauldrons of black sorcery aids Raziel in his quest. When imbued with air, Raziel will glide further than he could before; the earth reaver will give him greater weight and so enable him to walk with the fishes; light will give brilliance to his surroundings, dark will form bridges of shadows; and fire, well, it'll make an ideal portable barbecue. The execution of the Soul Reaver should be thought of as a more sophisticated version of 'scissors, paper, stone'. Once you've grasped the elements, you're laughing. Or are you?

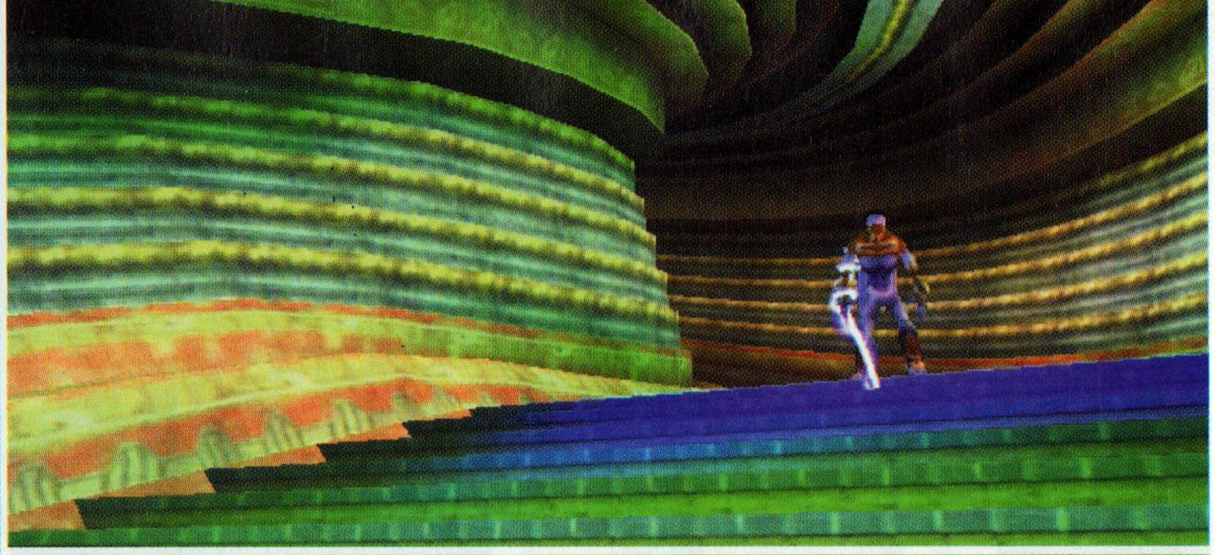
Kain has lured Raziel into a false sense of security. It will take a darn sight more effort than being a dab hand at spectral 'scissors, paper, stone' to mete out justice on Kain. He wasn't running from Raziel when he jumped into the portal, he was ensnaring him. Oops, we're saying too much.

The only thing Crystal Dynamics is eager to share with us without clamming up – and the thing that speaks volumes about the developer's dedication to the project – is how *Soul Reaver* has melded to the PS2 and taken it so perfectly in its cold embrace.

Nosgoth, despite being generations away from the vampire canker when we first set eyes on it in the sequel, looks more dreadful and imposing than it ever did in the original. We were allowed glimpses of the sublime jewel behind heavy, wooden doors and what we beheld was imposing. Giant, towering structures are no longer shrouded in fog or night, and vast cities and temples stretch out before you in all their putrefying beauty.

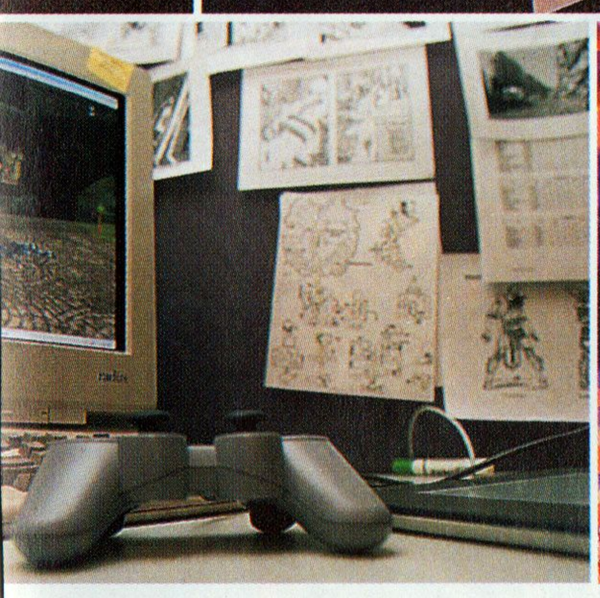
"Any fogging that appears in *Soul Reaver* will now be intentional. It will be used to propel the game, not hide inadequacies as it did in the first game," enthuses Amy, rubbing her palms and gesticulating wildly. "The textures on each wall or monolith are actually there in real-time too, not bitmapped as they were in *Soul Reaver*. Tiny, intricate cracks and nooks in the crumbling







Just a few of the concept sketches that literally papered the whole office.





Gone are the dull fogs, replaced with a vibrant (albeit dead) world. Beautiful.

facade of Nosgoth are real, and have depth. There is also a wealth of murals painted throughout Nosgoth that are far more than gothic graffiti." It is rumoured that the incidental, rune-like scrawls throughout will actually translate into legible English and offer snippets of information about Nosgoth's history.

Later on we witness for ourselves the murals Hennig had mentioned. Depictions of Raziel being worshipped by vampires are being designed and finalised and we gaze on in fascination. When questioned why Raziel should be depicted as something to be revered and worshipped, the designer simply turned around and tapped his nose. A polite way of telling us to go away and mind our own business.

The morphing of the realms so crucial to 1999's PSone version has survived the transition to PS2. For the uninitiated, Raziel must hop between the Material and Spectral worlds. Translated, these two worlds exist in the same space but look similar-but-different – a lake in the Material world is a pool of gas in the Spectral world, gleaming towers become twisted spires etc. Forced to return to the Spectral world to replenish his energy, Raziel can travel through this spooky plane and pop back into the Material world when needs be. This time out, it's a much more fluid transition between the two. For instance, look into the night sky when you're about to shift and the stars melt away, replaced by spiralling nebulas and ghostly astral bodies. Apologies for sounding so gushing over a videogame, but to witness a solid, expertly crafted world of vast structures visibly fizzle away in real-time to leave an organic timeless void is quite spectacular. It was done competently in *Soul Reaver*, but it's done with aplomb in the sequel.

//To witness a solid world of vast structures and artworks visibly fizzle away in real-time to leave an organic timeless void is quite spectacular//

SOUL REAVER

AN ETERNITY OF DAMNATION

The history of Nosgoth is a convoluted one. Take a trip into its dark past and discover the truth for yourself. If you can understand it all, that is.



☐ The **Pillars of Nosgoth** are formed. Reaching infinitely into space and deep down into the earth, these pillars are symbolic of the health of Nosgoth, binding together spirituality and the material world. Each of the nine pillars represents the things that bind the world together: Time, Nature, Energy, Mind, Conflict, Dimension, State, Balance and Death.

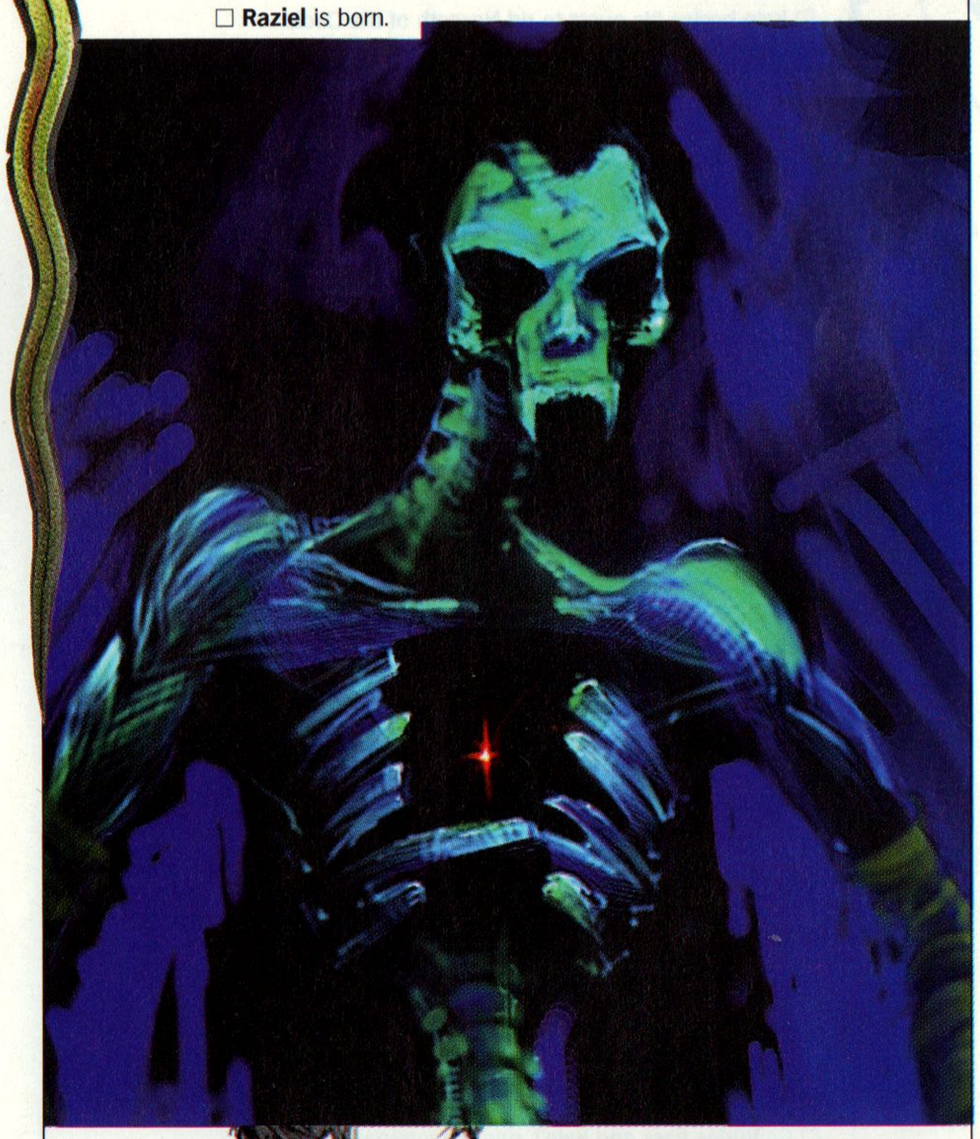
☐ Sorcerers known as the **Circle Of Nine** are charged with guarding the pillars, each having an affiliation with a particular pillar. Their origin, just like the appearance of the pillars, is unknown. When a sorcerer dies, a person destined from birth to succeed them takes their place.

☐ A sword is forged. It is named the **Soul Reaver**.

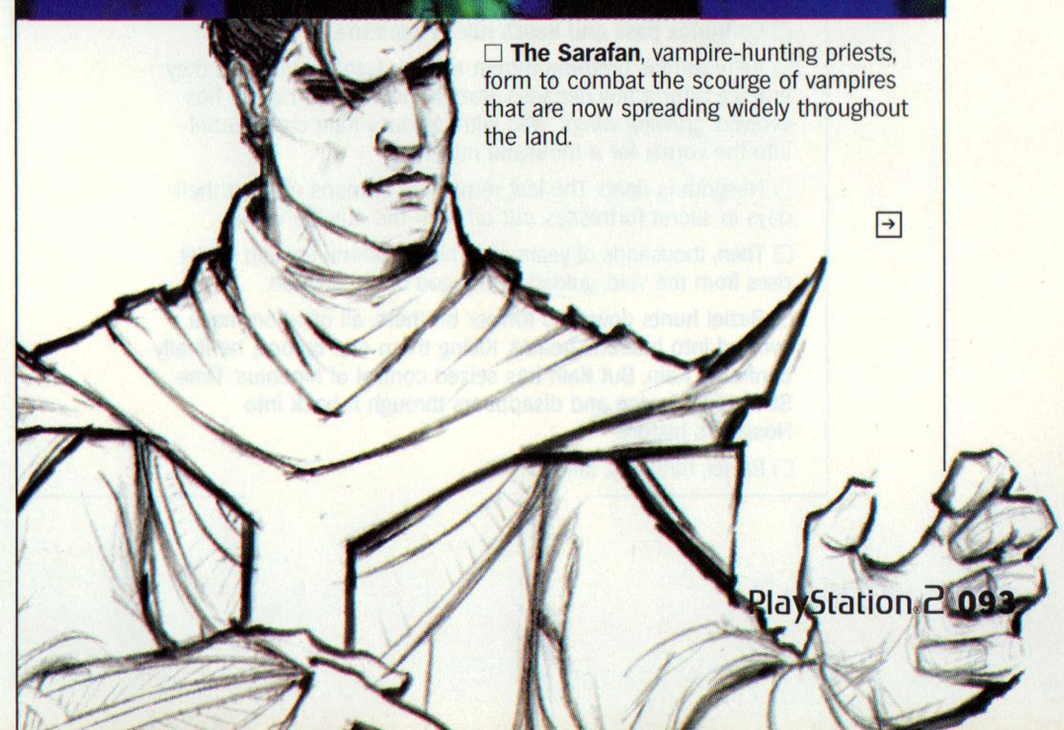
☐ A human is born by the name of **Vorador**.

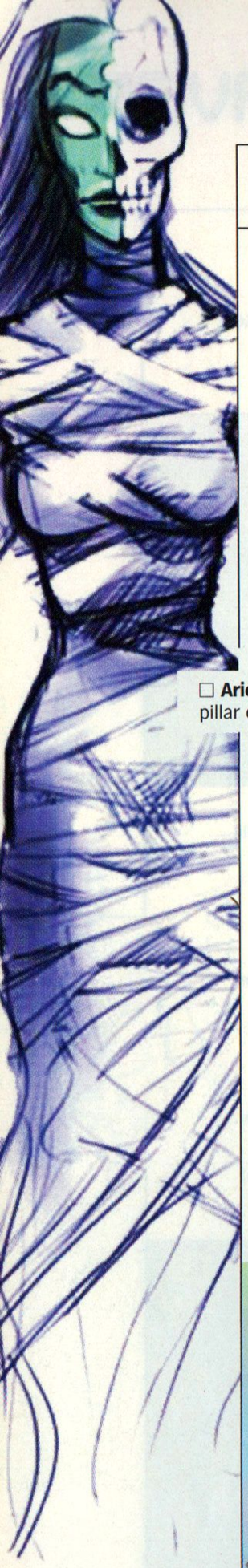
☐ Vorador is quickly consumed by the darkness, turning vampiric, a disastrous event that triggers the very beginning of Nosgoth's demise.

☐ **Raziel** is born.



☐ **The Sarafan**, vampire-hunting priests, form to combat the scourge of vampires that are now spreading widely throughout the land.





AN ETERNITY OF DAMNATION CONT...

☐ Raziel joins The Sarafan and is quickly promoted to command alongside other Sarafan warriors Turel, Dumah, Melchiah, Zephon, Malek and Rahab.

☐ The slaughter eradicates thousands of undead, bringing the species close to extinction.

☐ Vorador infiltrates the Circle Of Nine in an attempt to spread chaos across Nosgoth and halt the slaughter. He murders six of the sorcerers.

☐ **Mortanius**, guardian of the pillar of death, survives but punishes Malek, guardian of the pillar of conflict and Sarafan commander, for not protecting the Circle. He fuses Malek's soul to a magical suit of armour. Grumpy sod.

☐ The Sarafan are wiped out.

☐ Vorador retreats from the chaos he has unleashed upon the world and hides in a mountain top fortress.

☐ The chaos grips Mortanius, he becomes possessed and begins a descent into madness.

☐ **Ariel**, surviving sorcerer and guardian of the pillar of balance is murdered by Mortanius.

☐ Ariel's murder drives Nupraptor (guardian of the pillar of Mind and her lover) into a deep grief. His despair spreads throughout Nosgoth, infecting the surviving Circle Of Nine.

☐ Deranged with madness, the surviving Circle members start poisoning the land with witchery and black magic.

☐ Kain is born as the successor to Ariel.

☐ The magic within the pillars starts to wane with infection.

☐ Kain begins the journey across Nosgoth to take Ariel's place in the Circle and restore balance to the world.

☐ Mortanius, swinging between madness and sanity, hears of Kain's quest and orders his assassination.

☐ In the small village of **Ziegsturhl**, Kain is assassinated.

☐ Mortanius travels to the netherworld to rescue Kain's soul. He offers Kain the chance to exact revenge on his assassins but the only way he can return is as a vampire. Kain accepts.

☐ Kain kills his murderers and continues his journey to the pillars. He is visited by the spirit of Ariel who promises him peace in return for the destruction of the Circle of Nine, most of whom are now either undead or fuelled by demons.

☐ Kain begins his quest to rid Nosgoth of the Circle.



☐ Kain is visited by **The Oracle**, a mysterious soothsayer, after some of the Circle elude capture. The Oracle directs Kain to the ancient stronghold of Vorador, still perched on the mountain top. This is a ruse, though. The Oracle is Moebius, one of the corrupt Circle of Nine and guardian of the pillar of Time.

☐ Vorador tells of the vampire purge at the hands of the Sarafan and Circle. Kain learns a great deal about the thing he is trying to restore; the very thing that would have him dead.

☐ Kain discovers the **Time Streaming Device** created by Moebius, guardian of the pillar of Time.

☐ Kain cleanses each pillar, restoring all but one – Balance.

☐ Ariel appears to Kain and explains that he must sacrifice his own cursed body to restore balance to the pillars.

☐ But he has learned of the slaughters from Vorador and refuses, choosing instead to rule Nosgoth and allow the chaos and rot to spread. He bases the throne of his new, unchallenged vampire empire at the seat of the pillars. Oops.

☐ Kain locates the tombs of the dead Sarafan commanders and raises them to rule as his undead vampire army.

☐ Raziel is the first to be risen and is therefore the strongest.

☐ Kain's Lieutenants spread throughout Nosgoth ravaging the humans, turning the world into a place of fear and death.

☐ Centuries pass and Kain's rule is supreme.

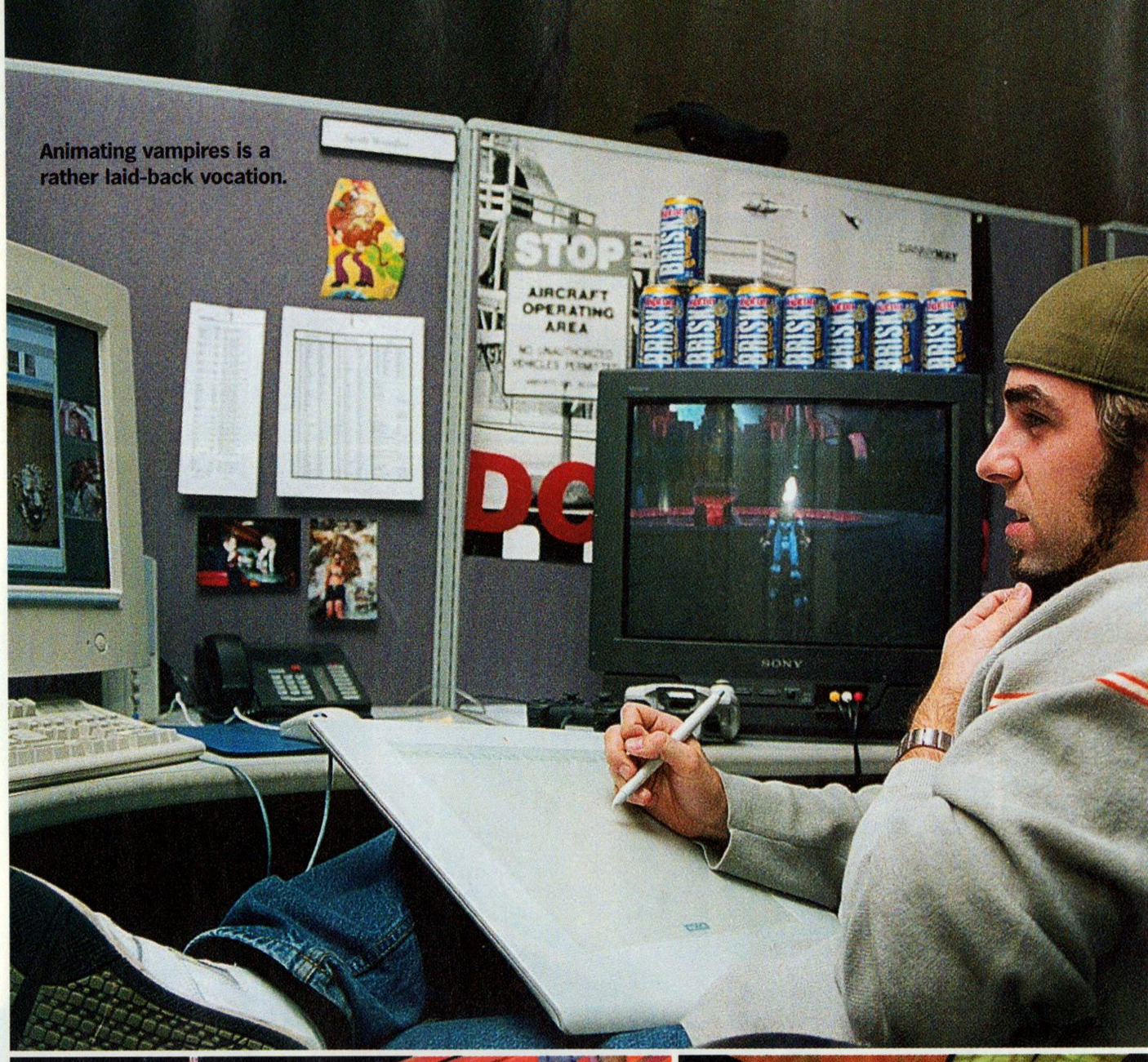
☐ Kain and his brethren retreat to their tombs but when they emerge after a few decades, Raziel – Kain's first born – has evolved, growing wings. Wild with jealousy Kain casts Raziel into the vortex for a thousand millennia.

☐ Nosgoth is dead. The last remaining humans eke out their days in secret fortresses, cut off from the outside world.

☐ Then, thousands of years after his excommunication Raziel rises from the void, guided by the god of the undead.

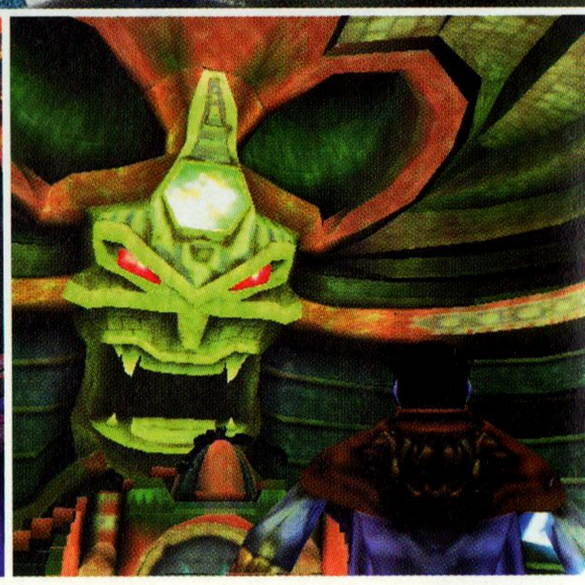
☐ Raziel hunts down his former brothers, all of whom have evolved into hideous beasts. Killing them one by one, he finally confronts Kain. But Kain has seized control of Moebius' Time Streaming Device and disappears through it back into Nosgoth's history.

☐ Raziel, naturally, follows...



Animating vampires is a rather laid-back vocation.





The detail of Nosgoth has improved tenfold.

I VANT TO SUCK YOUR BLOOD

As the tour of the office draws to a conclusion, we are pulled to one side. Would we like to see a bit of 'under the counter' vampire action? Well, who could resist such an offer?

Lead through a maze of underground tunnels, thick with human putrescence and infested with rats, we make our way into a quieter, more secluded part of the building. Humanoid forms beaver away on development PCs, animating crooked villages and medieval fortifications, and in our peripheral vision we saw him. A face from many moons ago (six years to be precise). Pallid complexion, seductive ruby lips, the Soul Reaver at his side and a look on his face that suggests someone might have just questioned his parentage. It was Kain and we had just entered his domain. This was where the Crystal Dynamics mages are weaving spells and feverishly working through the arduous process of reincarnation. Standing in Nosgoth, alive and well and preparing to unleash himself back on the gaming world, was the vampire that had started it all in the first place. *Blood Omen* has also returned.

Andrew Bennett, our guide into this infested area and Executive Producer for Crystal Dynamics, explains. "The reason for making a *Blood Omen* sequel as well as a *Soul Reaver* sequel is because we want to create two different franchises, both set in the same world. Like *Star Trek Voyager* and *Deep Space Nine*. Each of these programmes are distinctly individual but you know they are part of the same universe – that's what we're aiming to achieve with *Blood Omen* and *Soul Reaver*."

Kain's new story revolves around his quest, 200 years after the very first *Legacy Of Kain* game (1996) to raise a vampire army and bind all the vampire clans together. Most of them have retreated underground, beaten

//In our peripheral vision we saw him. Standing in Nosgoth, alive and well, was the vampire that had started it all. *Blood Omen* has also returned//



Amy Hennig, Director of both *Soul Reaver* games. Normal, isn't she?



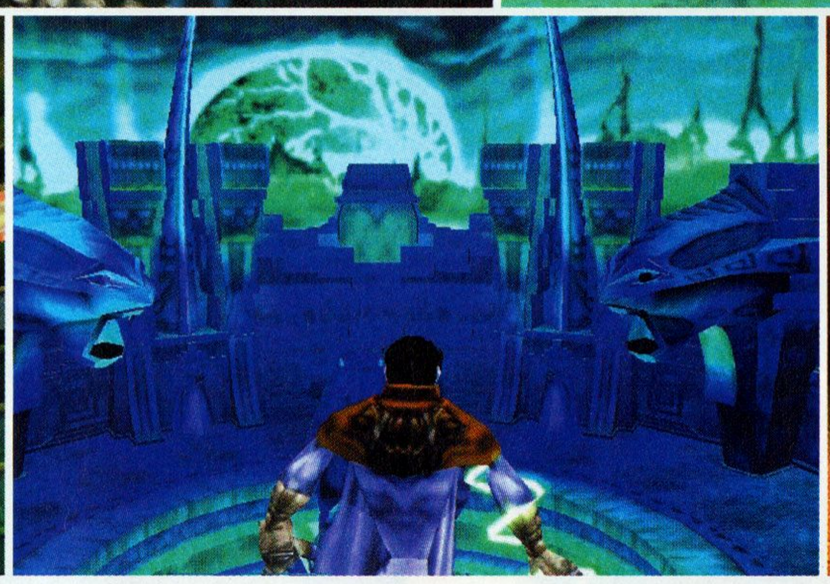
Legacy Of Kain's sound technician. Almost as scary as Raziel.

THEY DID THE MONSTER MASH
(It Was A Graveyard Smash)

Making the dead come to life is harder than just holding a very loud alarm clock to their rotting ears. They need to look good, yes, but they also need to sound right. Various methods were employed to get the sound representations for the game, including dropping steaks and melons on to concrete, but surprisingly Coca-Cola was used to great effect. By crushing a can, then slowing down the speed of the recording, the team were able to produce the sound of stone sliding on stone. Raziel also has a secret history. He is voiced by the man responsible for The Smurfs' squeaky vocal warblings. Kinda shatters your illusions, doesn't it?

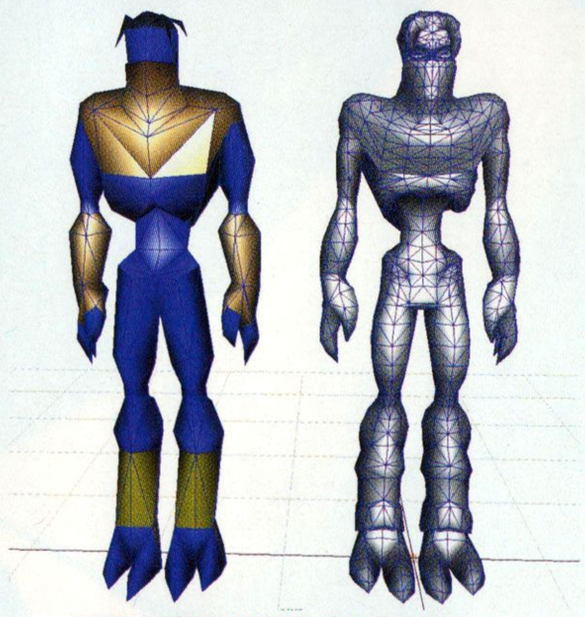












MY, HOW HE'S GROWN!
And people thought is was just the leftovers from the first game...

Raziel is now even more detailed, as you can see from these two wireframes. The one on the left is Raziel in his PSone form. Made up of just over 500 polygons, it was a pretty simple model compared to the new Raziel. The PS2 hero has over 3,000 polygons which gives him real eye sockets, fluid movement of his hair and cowl, greater facial details, and muscle tone under his clothing. And in case you were wondering, this is a different version of Raziel than that belonging to the Dreamcast! Remember, everything *SR2* offers is completely new!

back by human civilisation, but Kain has to stop the retreat and turn the tide for the undead. Little is known about the game, other than the fact that use of stealth and tactics are more important than puzzle-solving. Kain can influence the weak-minded and get them to open locked doors for him, he can walk through streets undetected until he actively seeks confrontation, but when clashes do come they are more than just 'hack, slash, oops there goes your arm' affairs. Kain can parry with his sword, counterattack, deflect and generally act like the no-good undead dandy that he is. If you don't fancy your chances against heavily armoured guards then you can seduce maidens into dark alleyways then knock them to the floor, remorselessly kick them in the stomach as they claw the cobbles in a vain attempt to escape (yes, really) and suck the blood from their twitching corpse. You can even sneak up behind someone and rip their heart out through their back. Delightful.

To be honest, *Blood Omen 2* looks even better than the forthcoming *Soul Reaver* sequel – as it should do, given it's so far off in the future. Just when we were relishing Kain's abilities to leap buildings in a single bound and snap people's necks by twisting them through 180 degrees, we are whisked away before unearthing too much. Our whistle-stop tour was at an end.

We had witnessed first-hand the struggle of Crystal Dynamics to appease the more-than-fair criticisms of the first *Soul Reaver* and a company eager to differentiate the two *Soul Reaver* games, carving out a niche for both. We had seen an enhanced Nosgoth, a place steeped in history and an architecture second to none. We saw the true potential of the *Soul Reaver*, the superb morphing of the realms and an end in sight to Raziel's vendetta with Kain. But we also saw new beginnings. Kain is back and looking exceedingly promising. And Raziel, deified and trapped by his own destiny, is embarking on a spectacular journey of his own, one that will see the eventual release of *Soul Reaver 3* and *Blood Omen 3* and yet another further delve into the dark, cursed land of Nosgoth. It's a frightening place Crystal has constructed, so strap on your crucifixes, splash on a handful of the holy wet stuff and take your first tentative steps into the darkness of PS2 *Soul Reaver*. A few people are dying to meet you. □

LOVE AT FIRST BITE

Undead-related games to try out on PSone while waiting for *Soul Reaver 2*.

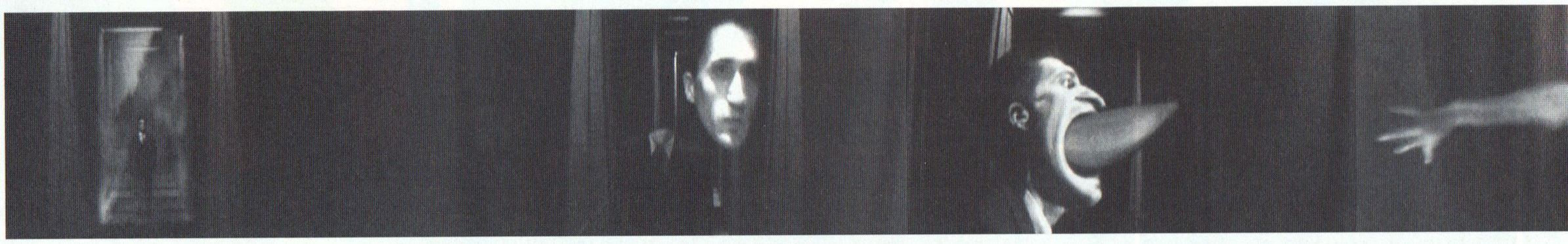
LEGACY OF KAIN: BLOOD OMEN
The game that started it all. Kain began as a human, got dead, got angry and got people lusting for the dead in their droves. Has since spawned three sequels. What a game. Check it out in any second-hand games store.

LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER
The sequel to *Blood Omen*, this is a classic in its own right. Lara-beating puzzles and visuals make this an absolute must-have for any PSone owner. Available on Platinum, too, so there's no excuse!

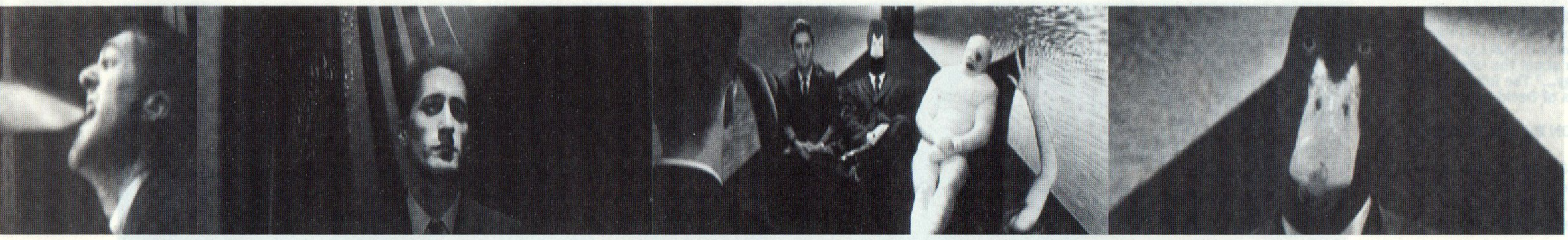
VAMPIRE HUNTER D
Resident Evil-style vampire hunting game. Confusing controls and a star who wears a three-foot wide fedora. He also has a face growing in his left palm (we kid you not). Avoid.

COUNTDOWN VAMPIRES
Punters turn into vampires after contact with a batch of well dodgy liquor and seize control of a Las Vegas casino. Available only on import, this is the first game to mix Black Jack with the undead. Quite appaling.

DRACULA: THE RESURRECTION
Point-and-click adventure set soon after the end of *Dracula*. The King Of The Pointy-Toothed People gets all *Monkey Island* on us but the lack of humour is a decided let-down. Stick to the *Broken Sword* games if you must.



Stills from The Third Place (above) and the bloke what made it – Mr David Lynch. Looks almost normal, don't he?



WORDS: MIKE GOLDSMITH/ON SET PHOTOGRAPHY: SONY+TBWA/INTERVIEW PHOTOGRAPHY: PIERS HANMER

THE THIRD PLACE

Sony Japan deemed it 'a glimpse of the future'. Sony Europe envisaged 'a living gateway to an open future'. David Lynch saw it as an arm coming out someone's mouth. Just how do you market the future of home computer entertainment? *OPS2* takes you to The Third Place, with an exclusive on-set report from 'that' PS2 advert..

As couches go, it's fairly run of the mill. Luxuriously upholstered, slightly scalloped for that Art Deco feel, neatly tapered wooden legs and covered in, well, that would give it away. Whether someone's playing an in-joke with us here isn't clear, but the fact is that the couch featured at the climax of what is undoubtedly the most bizarre videogaming advert ever is covered in blue velvet.

Need another clue? When *OPS2* sits on the couch, it's empty and drenched in the pacific blue Sony has used for the PlayStation 2's marketing since its Japanese launch. The next time we see the couch is on TV where it's now not only black and white, but it seats a fully-bandaged gimp, a man with a duck's head and the mirror image of the bloke who's just spent the last 60 seconds being set on fire, losing his hand, losing his head (literally) and coughing up an arm. All this from a couch. Welcome to David Lynch's vision for PlayStation 2. Welcome to The Third Place.

TAKE ONE: THE CLIENT

OPS2 is in Los Angeles for the filming of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe's TV advert for the PlayStation 2. Costing approximately £750,000 the advert will run in at least 20 territories (including Australia and New Zealand) and is at the head of a total launch marketing campaign that will set SCEE back approximately £20m. SCEE have decided to push the envelope by not only working with ad agency TBWA (responsible for the award-winning *Fi-Fi* ('Land on your own moon...') and *Double Life* ('I've conquered worlds...') PSone campaigns by hiring cult director David Lynch to create the 60-second promo. It's a bold move to unleash the man who created *Eraserhead*, *Twin Peaks* and *Wild At Heart* onto what the general public consider to be nothing more than an update of the original PlayStation.

"With the first PlayStation, all it really stood for was power," considers Alan Welsman, SCE (UK) Director of Marketing and the man who oversaw the PR for the 1995 launch of the original PlayStation. "This new proposition has to take us through into whatever we become in the next five, ten or even 20 years. This isn't just another ad campaign. It's the beginning of a new feeling for the whole PlayStation brand."

The 'new feeling' revolves around the notion of The Third Place. It's a well-discussed media buzzphrase, but one that's never been interpreted in quite such an esoteric way – especially for a videogame advert.

"This place exists," continues Welsman's partner-in-crime and Marketing Manager for SCE (UK), Darren Carter. "The theory is that you're at work and you're at home but a place exists where you define what you want to do in it. It's been written about bars and cafes but PlayStation 2 subverts the whole concept of what a Third Place should be. I'll paraphrase the concept but, 'It's not simple place, it's not easy space, it's not mental space, it's not physical space – it's whatever you want to define as being your Third Place. You define what you want to be in it and have around you.' The whole point – and the response we want to get from the ad – is that it's an excited fear, a new unknown but, during it, you think you're going to like it."

Quite. But behind all the ad-speak lies the hard facts that SCEE hopes will turn the PlayStation 2 into more than just another games console.

"The actual proposition for PlayStation 2 is 'a living gateway to an open future'," continues Welsman. "We're honest enough to say that yes, it will have broadband connectivity but what form that will take and what the Hard Disk Drive will allow you to do, we don't know. No one's dictating to you what PlayStation 2 is – you dictate to yourself how you want to use it."

One problem is that this 'It's your choice' sloganeering has been recently done to death, especially with new technology firms. Huge corporations selling our rebellions back to us with a registered trademark on top. See 'Where do you want to go today?', 'Do something', 'You make it what it is', 'What do you want the Internet to be?' etc etc.

//No one's dictating to you what PlayStation 2 is – you dictate to yourself how you want to use it//

WOODCUTTERS FROM FIERY SHIPS

Lynch's lost anime/DVD adventure.

"(It's) a beautiful kind of place to put yourself. You try to make a little bit of mystery and a bit of a story, but you want it to be able to bend back upon itself and get lost..."

In his own oblique way, David Lynch is describing *Woodcutters From Fiery Ships*, a digital DVD-ROM adventure he was executive producing with Bandai and Japanese game and multimedia developer/publisher, Synergy Inc. Announced back in March 1998, Lynch and his Hollywood-based interactive company SubStation would provide "content" and "an entirely new tale" for the game, which would be developed by Synergy in cooperation with Lynch. Synergy is a Tokyo-based multimedia firm, known for such highly-acclaimed interactive CD-ROMs as *Underworld*, *GADGET* and *Iron Angel of the Apocalypse*. They also published games in Japan for Electronic Arts, Interplay, Hasbro Interactive and Ubi Soft. Lynch said, "By collaborating with Synergy, I look forward to *Woodcutters From Fiery Ships* expanding existing forms in terms of story, characters and environment. I hope we will give people totally unexpected experiences."

So what happened? Talking to *The Guardian*'s Jonathan Romney in November 1999, Lynch declared that *Woodcutters* was "blocked from the get-go" because it was perceived the story would have been boring to the hardcore games of Synergy's homeland. The game was due for release in late 1999, with some video segments shot in June of that year. Images have never surfaced of *Woodcutters* but Lynch did describe the plot to *The Guardian* in his own inimitable style.

"Certain events have happened in a bungalow which is behind another in Los Angeles. And then suddenly the woodcutters arrive and they take the man who we think has witnessed these events, and their ship is... uh, silver, like a Thirties kind of ship, and the fuel is logs. And they smoke pipes."

See David Lynch's forthcoming home page www.davidlynch.com for further info.

THE LYNCH EFFECT

"The money's good, and the added bonus is that I get to use and learn about the latest technology..." The full rundown of the ads of David Lynch

OBSESSION BY CALVIN KLEIN (1988)
A series of three TV spots, centred around the work of three authors – F Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway and DH Lawrence.

GEORGIA COFFEE (1991)
A series of ads for the Japanese canned coffee, Georgia. Set in *Twin Peaks*, it involves the mystery behind a Japanese man's missing wife, solved by Agent Cooper.

WE CARE ABOUT NEW YORK (1991)
A public service announcement created to draw attention to the city's rat problem.

WHO IS GIO? (1992)
Giorgio Armani personally phoned David Lynch to ask him to come up with something for his new perfume. Lynch replied in the form of a small poem.

OPIUM (1992)
A TV commercial for the Yves Saint Laurent fragrance.

ALKA-SELTZER PLUS (1993)
A short series of two commercials.

BARILLA PASTA (1993)
TV Italian food commercial.

THE WALL (1993)
Lynch's bizarre commercial for sports firm Adidas, based around a marathon runner.

REVEALED (1993)
A public service announcement on breast cancer for American Cancer Society.

THE INSTINCT OF LIFE (1993)
An unknown advert created for Jill Sander.

SUN MOON STARS (1994)
An advert for Karl Lagerfield's perfume, starring Daryl Hannah.

DEAD LEAVES, AUNT DROID, NUCLEAR WINTER AND ROCKET (1997)
Four commercials created for the Sci-Fi Channel, each featuring the slogan, 'Ever Wonder?'

CLEAR BLUE EASY (1997)
A series of moody black-and-white ads for a home pregnancy test.

PARISIENNE (1998)
An ad for FJ Burrus' Parisienne cigarettes, aired in Switzerland.

TECHNICS (1999)
A magazine advertisement for the hi-fi company.

See top David Lynch unofficial site, The City Of Absurdity (www.geocities.com/Hollywood/2093/index.html) for more.



Appearing on an eBay near you... TBWA's Trevor Beattie proudly displays a momento from the set.

Where it all started... SCE (UK)'s Alan Welsman (left) and Darren Carter.

"No one knows where this digital world is going," argues Welsman. "What we're saying is that we'll take you there. We're not going to guide you as none of us know what's coming next, but just that it's exciting so why not come with us? Wherever we're going."

But while broadband might be the highway that take us to SCEE's Third Place, back in the year 2001 we'll be playing games until the builders get around to constructing that particular piece of road.

"There will be times when we talk about the features of the PlayStation 2," admits Welsman. "It plays DVD movies, it plays your old games. But in terms of setting out what PS2 stands for, it's not about selling the features of it. If you're an entertainment medium, there's a part of you that says you have to give out something that entertains or that people talk about. Even if it is a negative reaction, at least we're being talked about. It's about depth and layers. If you think about the concept of The Third Place, I can't define it."

Time to talk to someone who can.

TAKE TWO: THE CREATIVE

Sat beside a pool in LA's famous Sunset Marquee Hotel, TBWA's Trevor Beattie is a relaxed man. Filming has gone well with David Lynch, despite the sad fact that the director's friend Richard Farnsworth (Oscar-winning star of Lynch's *The Straight Story*) died midway during the shoot. He's also spent a jet-lagged morning in front of the TV watching Michael Schumacher win the Formula One World Championship for Ferrari and the baying tifosi.

Beattie and TBWA came onboard for the PS2 launch campaign back in January of 2000. After SCEE came through with ideas, TBWA came back with the 'living gateway to an open future' proposal. According to Alan Welsman, "The Third Place wasn't the first idea. It came out of the second string, which isn't bad actually. Some of the original ideas had things we liked but they just didn't have the longevity. Unlike last year's campaigns, PlayStation 2 is a launch and has to follow through in terms of everything we do in the future."

And thus The Third Place. Beattie submitted his script and looked at various directors, including Tony Kaye, Director of *American History X* and makers of ads for such companies as Nike, Reebok and Mercedes Benz. It was then that Beattie declared that, as Welsman reminisces, "If Tony Kaye lives in The Third Place, then David Lynch is his landlord." Enter David Lynch. "It's one of the greatest moments of my professional life," declares a sunglassed Beattie, Lynch's clapperboard proudly displayed in his hands. "I've grown up with Lynch's films. When I saw *Blue Velvet*, it lived with me for weeks afterwards. To actually find myself standing there with him, recreating something from my imagination was a genuinely freaky moment."

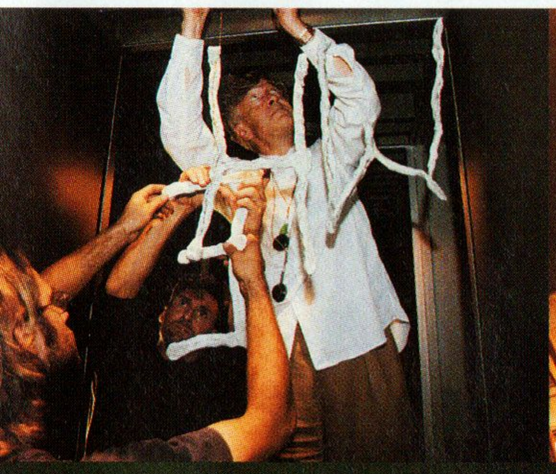
Yes, it's freaky but is it practical? Using David Lynch for an advert which is establishing the long-term brand of a console whose failure could realistically bring down a company is risky, to say the least. Lynch does come with a certain cachet.

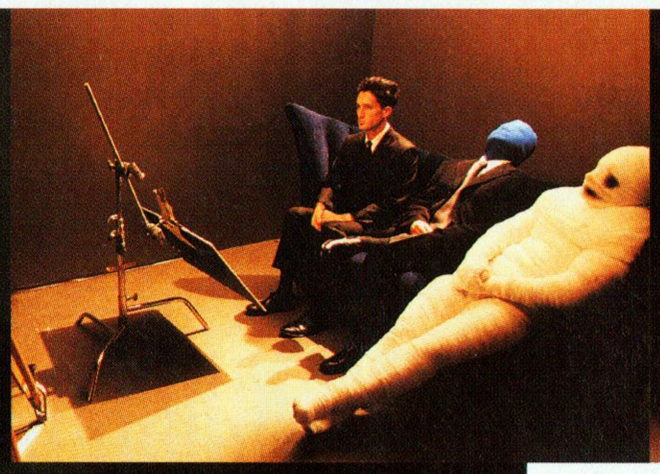
"Exactly," continues Beattie. "And you can't put people like that in a box. It was the same with Chris Cunningham (Director of *Fi-Fi*) last year. You've got to let these people do what they do – brilliantly. You give them that freedom and they love it – they're on your side and you get the best out of them. Lynch is as excited about the project as he is about anything he does. He finished his new movie last week and brought the same crew from the movie over to make this commercial."

But no matter how good the staff, it's still David Lynch – it's still a brave decision to use a man more famed for backwards-talking dwarves, log-fixated ladies and, generally speaking, the darker side of the tracks. Wasn't it tempting to be just a little more, well, obvious?

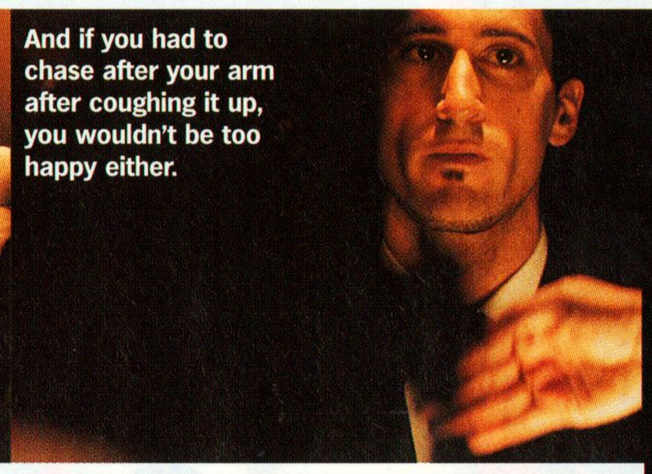
"That stuff will never go away," says Beattie, relishing a rant about one of his particular bête noires. "Here in America, I've got 79 TV channels. They're all shit – there's nothing on. I now realise that every other commercial here in America contains the important line, 'Introducing the all-new...' How f**king tragic is that? 'Introducing the all-new PlayStation 2'. That'd do – it'd sell stuff, wouldn't it? But it'd be condescending crap.

"The worse sort of advertising is condescending and talks down to people. The best sort of advertising challenges them, like the Guinness surfers film. It's the best advert ever made. It sells Guinness, people know what it's about but if you've got that idea, you're then allowed the freedom to illustrate that idea. The idea is 'Good things come to those who wait'. Got it. It's an integral truth. Now, go away and entertain me while you're telling me that simple truth. Right, PlayStation 2 takes me to The Third Place. Got it.

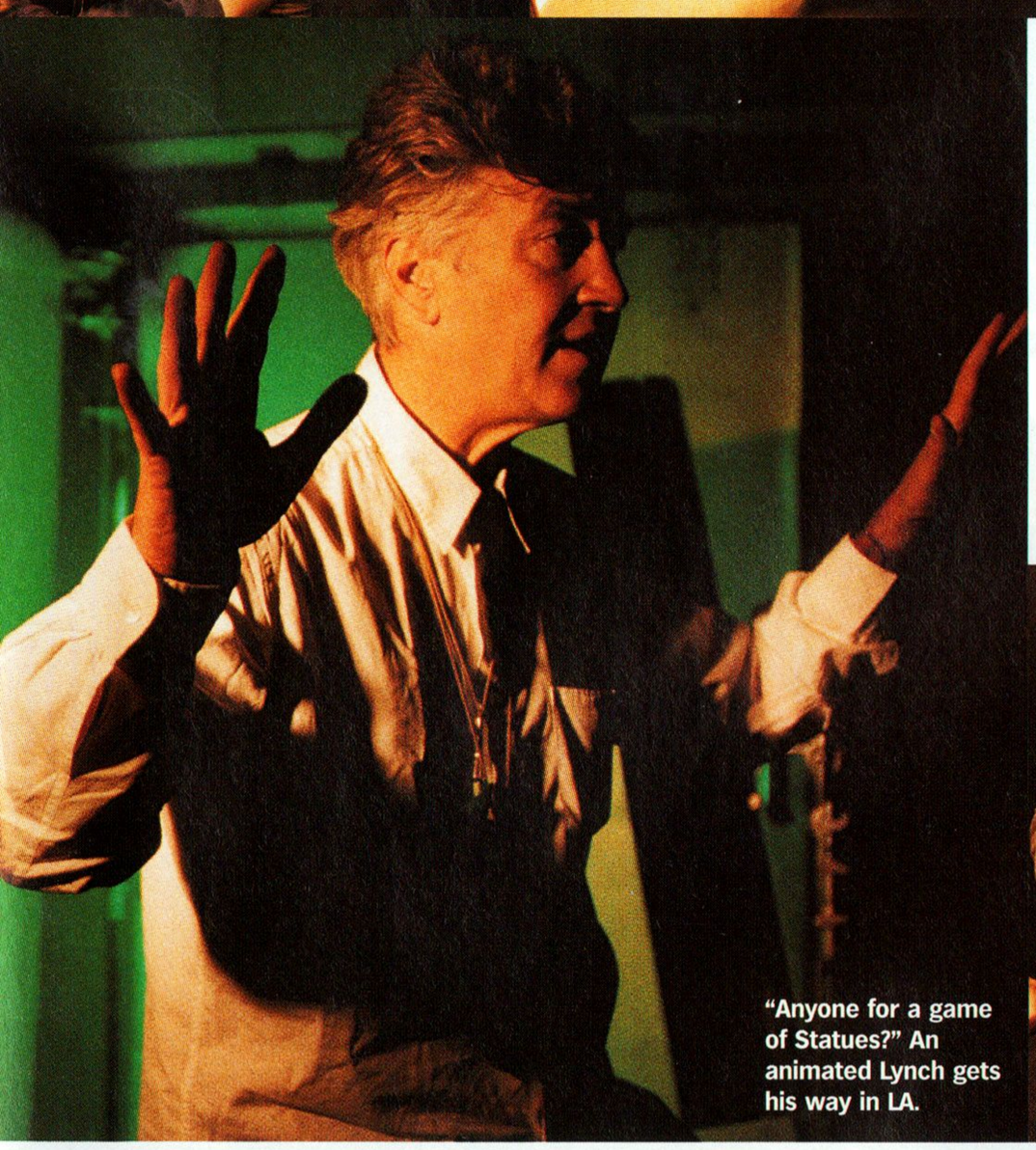




And if you had to chase after your arm after coughing it up, you wouldn't be too happy either.

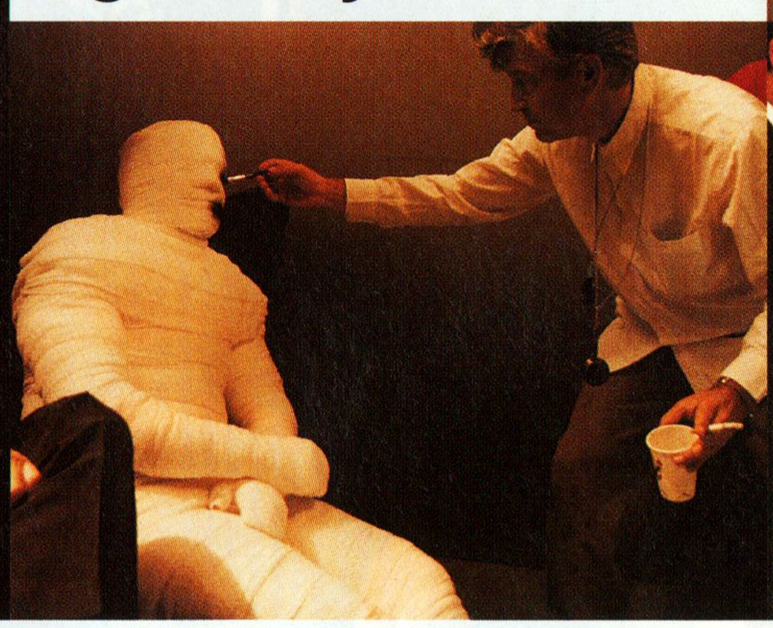


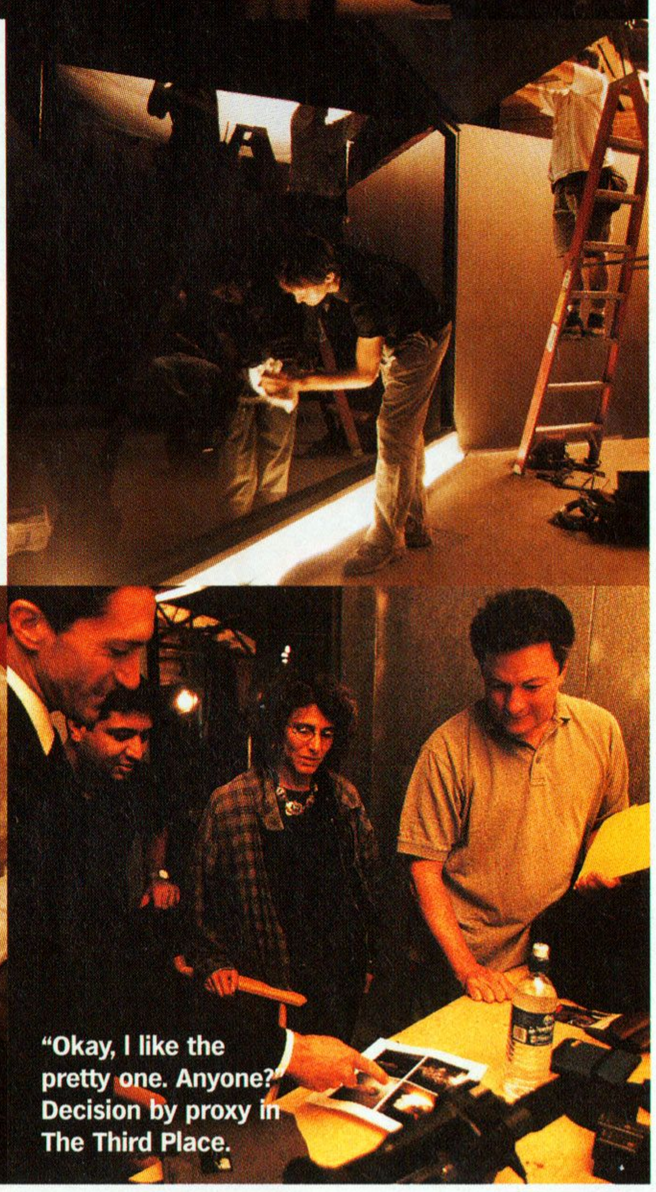




"Anyone for a game of Statues?" An animated Lynch gets his way in LA.

//Floating arms, mummified people and, yes, that duck are all sure to grab the eye//





"Okay, I like the pretty one. Anyone?" Decision by proxy in The Third Place.

Now feel free to entertain me with the journey to The Third Place and what the Dickens that place could look like on the way."

It's obvious Beattie's happy with his lot – and one that's going to take a lot of topping.

"It's the greatest moment of my career by a long way," he beams. "It's the idea of my career, the best client I've ever worked with and it's all been leading to this. Starting with the PlayStation shapes, going through to the *Double Life* film we made, onto *Fi-Fi* last year and culminating in this.

It's great that we're taking each other higher. We will follow this and do something else but, as it stands, this is the greatest moment of my career. I wrote a poem and I got the world's best director to interpret it."

Which brings us to David Lynch.

TAKE THREE: THE SHOOT

Take Highway 10 south out of West Hollywood. Head down past the turn off for San Bernadino, past the Staples Centre (home of the Lakers), through the early evening smog and then hang a right onto Santa Fe Boulevard. Welcome to Downtown. In fact, welcome so far downtown that the hired cameramen who are shooting footage for BBC2's *Money Programme* are unsure whether they really want to be here after dark. 'Here' is, of course, The Third Place.

Actually, 'here' is a empty warehouse at the end of a particularly unfriendly cul-de-sac. Dumpsters spill over with empty Corona boxes, boarded-up windows make for graffiti playgrounds, the obligatory hobo collects cans... It's a weird scene as the sun sets but it's nowhere near as weird as what's going on inside. Sculpted by Lynch, white Plasticine letters dangle on fishing wire, spelling out the word 'Where'. Metal sculptures decorate the walls as dry ice leaks onto the floor. Pink and green neon signs for a 'Poodle Parlour' hang from the ceiling. A thick glass window next to that now-vacated couch is smashed into countless shards by one of Lynch's men, but all the attention focuses on one corridor. Chipboard from the outside, the inside is a dankly-lit trip into David Lynch's psyche – flames shoot dangerously out on order, carefully-cut slats and overhead lighting create false perspectives while the ad's main character walking down this corridor sees his head float away. There's still plenty of post-production work to be done to transform this from a wooden corridor into the Third Place, but it's already not your usual videogaming advert.

Just over a month later and as the 60-second spot it's definitely not your usual videogaming advert. Floating arms, mummified people and, yes, that duck are all sure to not only grab the eye of those crucial early adopters, but upset a few sensibilities. As an ad and a statement, it's very much job done.

THAT'S A WRAP

A month or so on from October's shoot and The Third Place has launched in the UK. A series of four teaser trailers – the word 'Where', a blinking blue spot, etc – started the ball rolling while 30 and 60-second versions of Lynch's full advert coincide with the PS2 launch day. A world away from the garish images on that LA set, SCEE and TBWA are happy with the results.

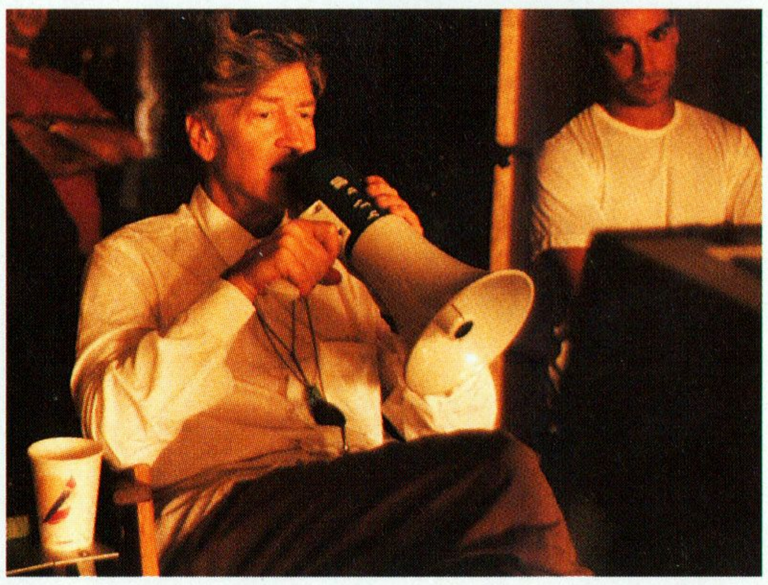
"We're in a world where some people find this type of ad stylised and enjoy it, while others think it's gone up its own arse and just don't get it," states Welsman. "It's all about setting up what we stand for early on but it's not about making sure everyone understands it instantly. I don't think we're far wrong when we say PS2 is The Third Place for the future because we're talking about this new digital world that isn't going to disappear. I don't think The Third Place as a phrase will go out of fashion because we're putting a label on something that no-one really understands."

"Three years, I'd say," says Beattie, when asked how long he sees The Third Place concept running for. "This is just the launch. It's where we take it now that really counts. But I don't think it's a fly-by-night idea. I think it's gonna be here for a while."

But what do you see yourself doing after something like this?

"Wait and see. I'll follow it by having a not-particularly weird commercial, I would've thought. Why be predictable...?" □

"I dunno. Can we make it just a little more, well, *ducky*?"





KEEP AHEAD of the game

Get Official UK PlayStation Magazine every month for the very latest news and reviews. The only magazine with a playable demo disc featuring the hottest new games.

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PlayStation®2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

CALENDAR 2001

Fact: There are already 170 PS2 games confirmed for UK release in 2001. Another fact: The figure is more likely to top 300 as new titles are confirmed for release almost daily. As the total teeters ever higher, there'll be games to keep you occupied on long winter nights, games to play as spring blooms, games to take on your summer holiday and games to put on next year's Christmas list. There's also events to attend, hardware to covet, DVDs to watch out for and, ooh, everything. Let's take a look at the calendar.



WORDS: STEVE MERRETT/ILLUSTRATIONS: MR JAGO

JANUARY

It's freezing outside so stay in with *Unreal*, *Moto GP* and a mug of mulled booze.



YOU WILL KNOW IT BY THE ENTRAILS OF THE DEAD

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

Epic Games/Infogrames

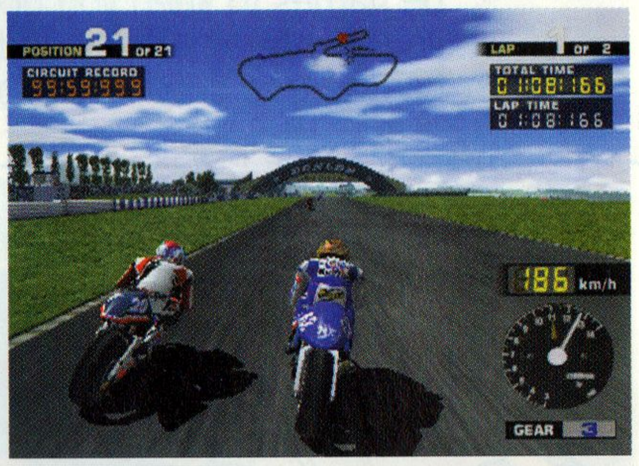
If games where the player legs it around corridors inflicting death is what you crave, then *Unreal Tournament* is the PlayStation 2 game for you. Originally released for PC as a predominantly online experience, the PlayStation 2's current lack of modem forces *Unreal Tournament*'s hand slightly, with Infogrames resorting to a more than worthy split-screen mode for its four-player killing sprees. Everything else, however, is bigger and badder than that of the PC precursor. The basic premise remains the same – ie kill everyone in sight, rack up kills, ad-lib to fade – but a sumptuous new appearance, specially created new levels and a more intuitive control system combine to raise the stakes and bolster an already impressive title.

The real key to *Unreal Tournament* is its unbridled action. The single or multiplayer modes are played at breakneck pace with an obscene array of OTT weaponry allowing for visually stunning lighting effects and immensely satisfactory kills. Add to this beautifully realised labyrinthine stages that act as stunning sets for the mayhem and you have a game that, on paper, sounds shallower than a paddling pool, but is in reality going to take PlayStation 2 by storm.



Thunder keeps it *Unreal*. Exclusive UK review next issue.

ALSO OUT IN JANUARY



MOTO GP

Namco/SCEE

Ridge Racer V masters Namco move into endorsed racing territory, with this simulation/arcade effort. Officially sanctioned by FIM Road Racing – the bods behind Superbike's World Championship Grand Prix circuit – the licence gives Namco full access to the courses and riders of the 2001 season. Based on the *500GP* Namco coin-op, the PlayStation 2 game is already shaping up as one of the more superior bike games, with slick handling and liquid visuals working together to create a fast-paced experience. The 500cc beasts enjoy the same photo-realism of *RRV*'s cars, while MultiTap users can revel in the game's four-player split-screen mode.



STREET FIGHTER EX3

Capcom/Capcom Eurosoft

This game only squeezed in by virtue that releases are thin on the ground in January. Capcom's *Street Fighter* series has been a staple of many a home format for the past ten years, but can it still really cut serious mustard in the PS2 era? Its longevity is mainly down to its taut control system that allows each of the 20 or so fighters to pull off gravity-defying kicks, projectile attacks or turn a move against the opponent. It is also a game that genuinely grows with the player, but is a lot less forgiving than *Tekken Tag Tournament*.

PHIL HARRISON'S FIVE

SCEE's Senior Vice President of development picks next year's PS2 winners.

1. *The Getaway*. "For the simple reason that it's ambitious – its tone of voice is clearly defined."
2. *DropShip*. "If Studio Camden can tie together the strategy and the shooting, it'll be really fun to play."
3. *Gran Turismo 3*. "It's so polished it has an attention to design that many games can only aspire to."
4. *Metal Gear Solid 2*. "It is one of the great moments of your career when you see something so visionary."
5. *Dark Cloud*. "It has that cleanness of Japanese design and a sense of humour that is subversive."

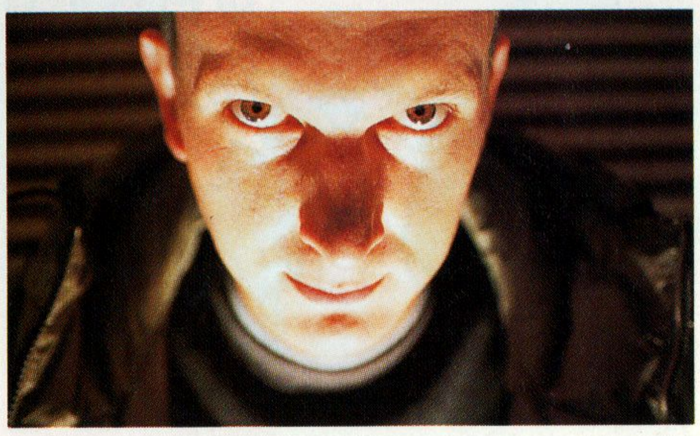


PHOTO: MARTIN BURTON

AND...

F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP
Ubi Soft/Video System
Officially endorsed but is this just another F1 racer? Needs to match its EA and SCEE rivals.

DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK
Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft
The 60-year-old duck stars in his first solo effort – a 3D-exploration/platformer.

SKY SURFER
Idea Factory/Virgin
Control an airboarder as they tumble out of a plane. Perform as many stunts as you can before opening a parachute.

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE
GameArts/Swing
Top mech fighting game, with rivals on the way in the form of *Armoured Core 2* and *ZOE*.

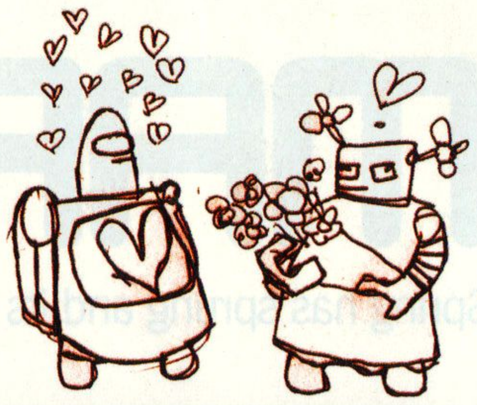
KESSEN
Koei/EA
Epic Oriental war strategy. Can the gameplay live up to the astounding graphics?

NBA 2001
EA Sports/EA Sports
Reliably realistic basketball sim.

DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S
Squaresoft/EA
Only really a rival to *GT3* if Square has rectified the abysmal handling.

FEBRUARY

Love is in the air… love for very fast Japanese supercars, that is.





SHINY, SHINY, SHINY SEATS OF LEATHER

GRAN TURISMO 3

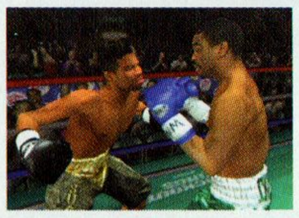
Polyphony Digital/SCEE

Despite Kazunori Yamauchi's reluctance to brand his latest *Gran Turismo* as the third in the series, it nevertheless stands head and shoulders – axle and exhaust? – over any other racer. Yamauchi-san's hesitant stance comes from the developer's predilection for perfection. He feels that *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec* as it currently stands, is a graphically superior version of the PSone games but feels that his plans for *GT3* would involve an all-new, excuse the pun, engine. Yamauchi shouldn't worry too much, though, as *Gran Turismo 3* – old-style dynamics or not – is still a superb racer.

While undoubtedly of the old school, with a reliance on slick cornering and casual overtaking, *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec* has the bodywork and performance PlayStation 2 racers are expecting. Featuring 150 photo-realistic cars to line its virtual forecourt, the detail within the 15 courses defies belief. Light effects dapple the gleaming cars as they slip effortlessly through country lanes and bustling cities, while touches such as smoke effects and handling differences elevate *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec* to near perfection. It might not be Yamauchi's idea of impeccability, but it'll do for now.

The dappled Supercars of the now-renamed *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec.*

ALSO OUT IN FEBRUARY



KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001

EA Sports/EA Sports

With Midway opting for the featherweight end of the boxing scale, EA's *Knockout Kings 2001* is a real heavyweight contender. Boasting a full complement of old and current heavyweights – including Lennox Lewis and George Foreman – the game enjoys an unrivalled level of detail. Each of the boxers has agreed to be body-mapped for use in the game to ensure their on-screen counterparts have anatomically correct physiques, while the fighting styles have also been emulated. Also of note is that bruising and cuts now appear on the faces of the boxers, with fights called off if there's too much bloodshed.



MDK2: ARMAGEDDON

Bioware/Interplay

MDK2 is a surreal fusion of game styles, with platform, shoot-'em-up and first-person elements all vying for attention. Holding these disparate elements together, though, is a simple yet entertaining game, with a very twisted sense of humour. Players star as Kurt Hectic whose rubber suit can withstand enemy fire, a six-legged robotic dog or a deranged scientist who cobbles together weapons from all manner of objects he finds lying around. Spanning ten levels, with additional tasks liberally dotted throughout, *MDK2* has a bizarre enthusiasm about it that draws the player in. Expect a very open and extremely enjoyable romp.

AND...

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT
Konami/Konami
The pomp and ceremony of big league NBA games is perfectly captured in this entertaining slam dunker.

ARMOURED CORE 2
From Software/Ubi Soft
Strategic first-person blaster with the player going robo-a-robo with a host of mechanoid miscreants.

ETERNAL RING
From Software/Ubi Soft
Elegant role-playing game, with a gem collecting theme. Rather than accruing points via battles and experience, players must find jewels and use their power to bolster skills.

EVERGRACE
From Software/Ubi Soft
Lumpy looking role-playing game that owes more than a little to Nintendo's *Zelda*.

TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE 2
Genki/Ubi Soft
Supercar road racing through the mean streets of Tokyo.

WAR MONKEYS
Silicon Dreams/Take 2
Real-time strategy effort set on a distant planet.

GAUNTLET: DARK LEGENDS
Midway/Midway
The classic *Gauntlet* coin-op turned into an RPG, where individual attributes are used in turn-based battles and exploration sequences.

ARMY MEN: AIR ATTACK 2
3DO/3DO
Plastic soldier warfare. Oversee toy bombers as the green faction blows chunks out of the browns within everyday environments.

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2
3DO/3DO
The toy soldiers spill into the battlefield, with Sarge and a new character, Vikki Bleu, splitting the missions between them.

WARRIORS OF MIGHT AND MAGIC
3DO/3DO
Classic *Dungeons & Dragons* fare, with the usual cast of orcs, dragons, thieves and warlords in attendance.

WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: THUNDER JETZ
3DO/3DO
More manic arena battles, this time with jet planes.

SILPHEED
GameArts/Swing
Undemanding 2D shoot-'em-up with dim prospects.

STEPPING SELECTION
Jaleco/TBC
Dance along to Britney in this Bemani jiving extravaganza.

STUNT GP
Team 17/Virgin
Light-hearted remote control car racer.

PSONE IN 2001

PS2's little brother is still going strong and 2001 will bring forth some great PSone games.

DUKE NUKEM: LAND OF THE BABES
N-Space/Infogrames (January)
The popular action hero flexes his ample muscles in an all-new adventure.

FINAL FANTASY IX
Squaresoft/Square Europe (Feb)
This RPG epic should be an essential purchase for every PS2 owner.

LMA MANAGER 2001
Codemasters/Codemasters (Feb)
Latest version of the best football management game ever to appear on a console.

FEAR EFFECT: RETRO HELIX
Kronos/Eidos (March)
Sequel to stylish and ambitious adventure title which has hopefully rectified the faults of the control system.

C12
SCEE Studio Cambridge/ SCEE (March)
A polished action adventure which comes across like *Syphon Filter* on a sci-fi trip. Should be massive.



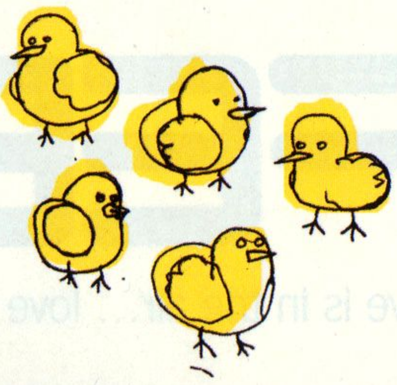
EVIL DEAD: HAIL TO THE KING
Heavy Iron Studios/THQ (April)
Survival horror adventure based on Sam Raimi's classic low-budget zombie flicks.

ISS PRO EVOLUTION 2
KCET/Konami (April)
The greatest football game ever is touched-up and tweaked to perfection. Better than *FIFA* any day.

PHOTO: GAVIN ROBERTS

MARCH

Spring has sprung and its many egg-citing gifts include *The Bouncer* and *Project Eden*.



ARE YOU ON THE GUEST LIST?

THE BOUNCER

Squaresoft/Square Europe

If any game has pretensions of grandeur, it's *The Bouncer*. Despite Square's protestations that it mixes RPG and action elements, this epic tale of three doormen battling to defuse a hostage situation in near-future environs, is basically a very entertaining and graphically awesome update of those old 'walking/fighting' *Final Fight*/*Golden Axe* arcade games that grace many a laundrette.

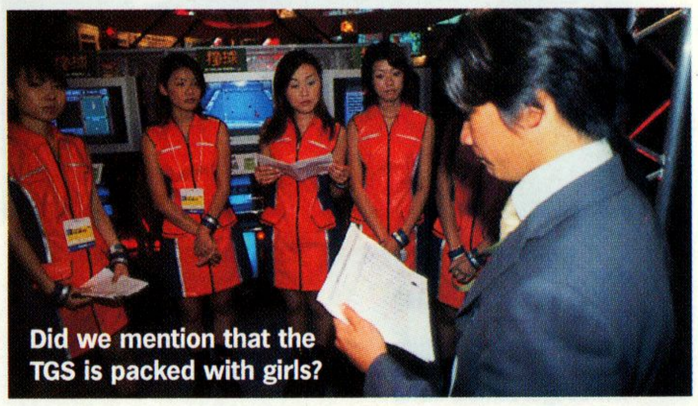
Such simplicity is anything but a hindrance to *The Bouncer*. Instead, it works to create a game that is a cinch to pick up, yet has the aesthetics to disguise its basic content. As the hordes crowd in on the game's burly stars, windows are put through and wooden palettes are smashed in scenes reminiscent of the bar-room brawls seen in grainy Westerns. Indeed, it is *The Bouncer*'s reliance on details that makes it so engaging. The fight scenes are a compilation of the best finishing moves, combinations and reactions the fighting genre has to offer, and a swirling camera zooms and pans to offer breathless coverage.

"C'mon, I'll take youse all on..." Sci-fi nightclub action in Square's visionary RPG/scrapper.

TOKYO GAME SHOW

March's Japanese gaming expo.

The first of the year's Tokyo Game Shows will be held on 30 March-1 April. With Japanese developers now getting comfortable with PS2 architecture, March's TGS should be the finest display of forthcoming games to date. It could be the first time the public has a chance to play *Metal Gear Solid 2*. We're also expecting to see Capcom's *Devil May Cry*, SCEI's *Extermination* and *Ape Escape 2*, Konami's *Silent Hill 2* and Namco's *Seven*, not to mention loads of other new weird and wonderful PS2 games. *OPS2* will be there to report back.



Did we mention that the TGS is packed with girls?

PHOTO: JAMES COPE

ALSO OUT IN MARCH



PROJECT EDEN

Core/Eidos

The name is ironic, since rather than show you paradise, the creators of *Tomb Raiders 1* and *2* have created a twisted future dystopia populated by vile mutations of humanity. As the rich build higher and higher into the sky, the less fortunate are left to fester on Earth's surface. As a result of neglect, pollution and disease some strange things have evolved down there and it's your job to investigate. You play as any of the members of the four-man reconnaissance squad. The adventure will involve shooting, puzzle solving and resource management – working as a team with the rest of your AI-controlled group. It's an ambitious game, but has the potential to be a true PS2 original.



ZONE OF THE ENDERS (ZOE)

KCEJ (West)/Konami

Hideo Kojima is fast becoming the King Midas of PlayStation 2. *Zone of the Enders* is proof positive that the brains behind *Metal Gear Solid 2* can take a run-of-the-mill idea and turn it into something fresh. Ostensibly another in the long line of all-action, explosion-laden mecha titles, *ZOE* is elevated by incredible artificial intelligence routines which ensure that, in the heat of battle, the enemy learn how you react to situations and target your weak points. Coupled with Kojima's typically lush visuals and a pulsing soundtrack, *ZOE* marries content with presentation beautifully.

AND...

WINBACK
Koei/Midas Interactive
A stealth title, in which players select a team of crack troops and send them into siege situations.

PARIS/DAKAR RALLY
Acclaim (Croydon)/Acclaim
Officially endorsed title based on the courses that feature in the gruelling rally challenge.

F1 2001
SCEE Studio Liverpool/SCEE
Incredibly realistic Formula One title, with Murray Walker on hand with the requisite commentary.

ESPN NHL NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT
Konami/Konami
Ice hockey game, with a full complement of NHL players and teams.

SHADOW OF MEMORIES
KCET/Konami
Spooky time-travelling adventure which opens with the central hero dying.

THE JUNGLE BOOK
Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft
Disney's animated classic comes to life in the form of a platform-based title.

RED FACTION
Volition/THQ
First-person shooter with realistic physics and progression that's dependent on lateral thinking.

EXHIBITION OF SPEED
Titus/Titus
Titus tries its hand at the racing genre. Details are scarce, but rumours indicate a number of classic cars will feature.

HIDDEN AND DANGEROUS 2
Illusion Softworks/Take 2
Superior war game, with the player guiding a team of soldiers behind enemy lines.

SPIDER-MAN
Neversoft/Activision
Every Spidey skill comes into play in this conversion of the top PSone title.

WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: THUNDER TANX
3DO/3DO
Insane tank game where the vehicles trundle into arenas and blow each other up.

KLONOA 2
Namco/SCEE
Bonkers platform game spanning 24 worlds. Cartoon graphics and sound effects indicate it's one for the kids.

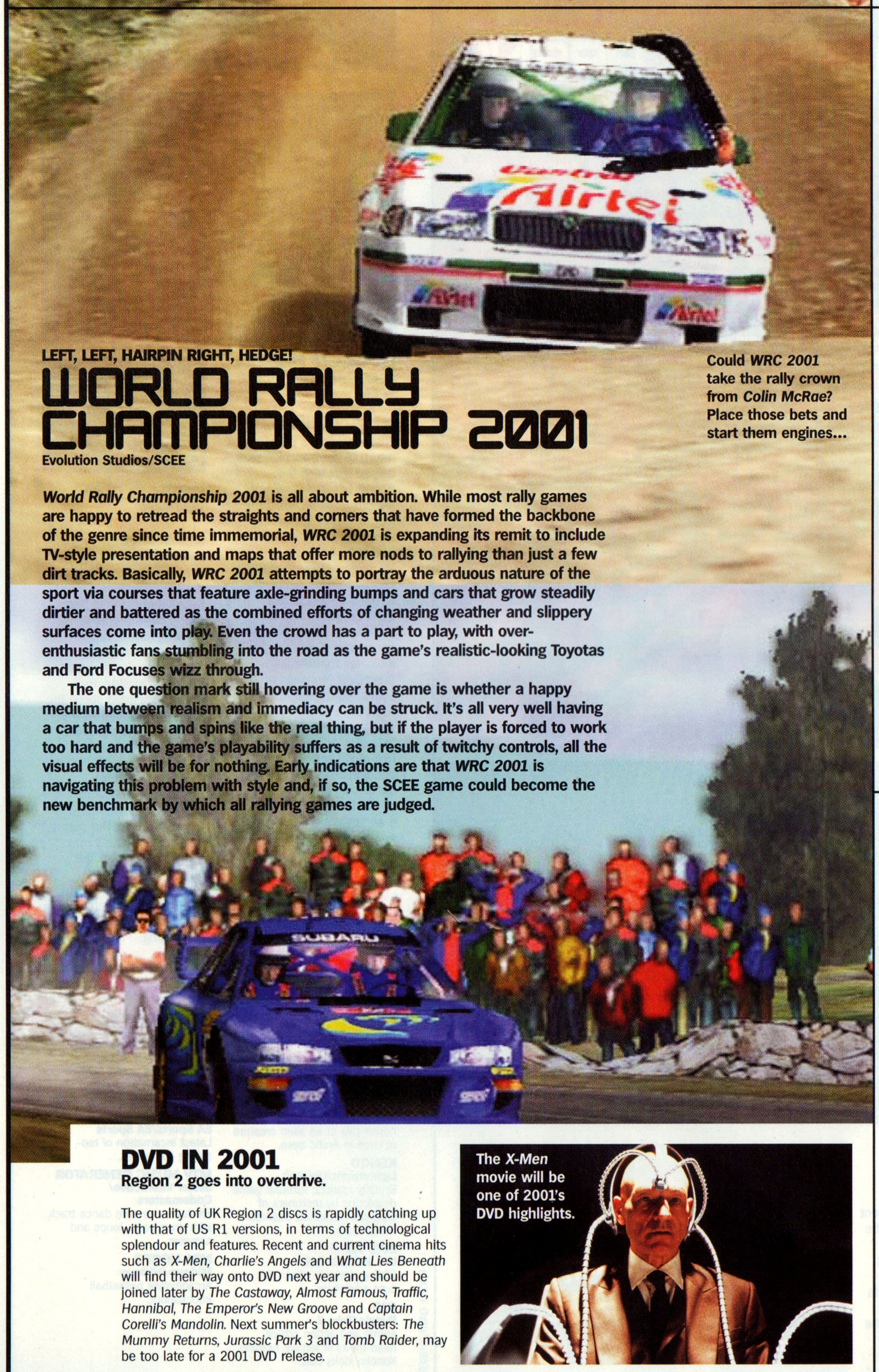
IQ REMIX
SCEI/SCEE
Involving puzzle game set within a pseudo-3D world.

COMMANDOS 2
Pyro Studios/Eidos
With WWII scenarios that involve running battles with the Nazis and the Japanese.

ROBOT WARLORDS
Dazz/Midas Interactive
Big robots go to war as Midas ramps up its PlayStation 2 support.

APRIL

The release schedule starts to look really busy as *WRC* and *TWINE* say hello.



LEFT, LEFT, HAIRPIN RIGHT, HEDGE!

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 2001

Evolution Studios/SCEE

Could *WRC 2001* take the rally crown from *Colin McRae?* Place those bets and start them engines...

World Rally Championship 2001 **is all about ambition. While most rally games are happy to retread the straights and corners that have formed the backbone of the genre since time immemorial, *WRC 2001* is expanding its remit to include TV-style presentation and maps that offer more nods to rallying than just a few dirt tracks. Basically, *WRC 2001* attempts to portray the arduous nature of the sport via courses that feature axle-grinding bumps and cars that grow steadily dirtier and battered as the combined efforts of changing weather and slippery surfaces come into play. Even the crowd has a part to play, with over-enthusiastic fans stumbling into the road as the game's realistic-looking Toyotas and Ford Focuses wizz through.**

The one question mark still hovering over the game is whether a happy medium between realism and immediacy can be struck. It's all very well having a car that bumps and spins like the real thing, but if the player is forced to work too hard and the game's playability suffers as a result of twitchy controls, all the visual effects will be for nothing. Early indications are that *WRC 2001* is navigating this problem with style and, if so, the SCEE game could become the new benchmark by which all rallying games are judged.

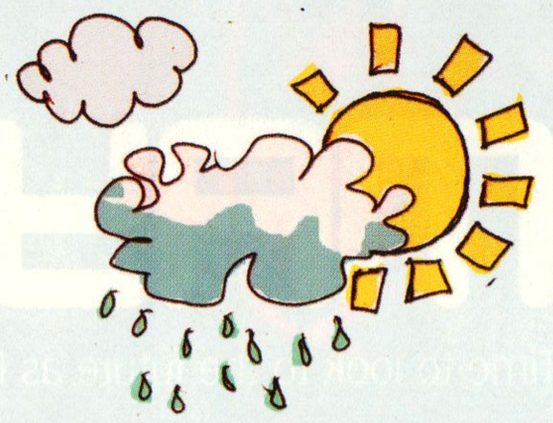
DVD IN 2001

Region 2 goes into overdrive.

The quality of UK Region 2 discs is rapidly catching up with that of US R1 versions, in terms of technological splendour and features. Recent and current cinema hits such as *X-Men, Charlie's Angels* and *What Lies Beneath* will find their way onto DVD next year and should be joined later by *The Castaway, Almost Famous, Traffic, Hannibal, The Emperor's New Groove* and *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*. Next summer's blockbusters: *The Mummy Returns, Jurassic Park 3* and *Tomb Raider*, may be too late for a 2001 DVD release.

The *X-Men* movie will be one of 2001's DVD highlights.

PHOTO: 20TH CENTURY FOX



ALSO OUT IN APRIL



THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

Electronic Arts/ Electronic Arts

Bond goes 3D in a stunning first-person shooter that smoothly mixes in other game styles. EA's licensing of the *Quake III* game engine is put to good use to create 3D worlds based on key scenes from the Pierce Brosnan extravaganza. Not only this, but the PlayStation 2 game also features cameos from a number of key characters, using the faces of their respective actors. However, it is the action set pieces that set Bond apart, and *TWINE* has more than enough. Huge explosions, races against time and a brilliant final standoff are just three high points in this potential blockbuster.



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER 2

Crystal Dynamics/Eidos

Vampire anti-hero, Raziel, has survived two daylight outings on PSone thanks mainly to the *Kain* series' well-balanced mix of action and exploration. Slightly more immediate than the *Tomb Raider* efforts, once again *Soul Reaver 2* drops the blood-sucking hero into a series of 3D locations as he chases series villain, Kain. This opens the door for a stunning title wherein the central character can morph into different forms, has access to a wide range of spells and encounters all manner of inhuman enemies. A support cast of wraiths, zombies and vampire hunters are on hand to complicate matters, but *Soul Reaver 2* flows like blood from a fresh wound and is one of the more superior pretenders to Lara Croft's throne.

AND...

SUMMONER
Volition/THQ
Traditional RPG epic which should satisfy the hardcore.

ARMY MEN: LOCK AND LOAD
3DO/3DO
Yet more toy soldier battles.

ARMY MEN: VIKKI'S ADVENTURES
3DO/3DO
Even more toy soldier battles.

BLOODY ROAR 3
HudsonSoft/Virgin
Bizarre fighting game where the combatants can turn into wolves, big cats and... rabbits.

LMA MANAGER 2001
Codemasters/Codemasters
The best of the current PSone football manager bunch and hopes are high for the PlayStation 2 game. Effortlessly mixes the dynamics of tactical play with exciting arcade elements.

CRASH BANDICOOT
Universal Interactive & Traveller's Tales/Konami
The PlayStation's signature character is returning to the platform fold after dabbling in the racing and puzzle genres.

EPHEMERAL FANTASIA
KCEJ (East)/Konami
Moralistic anime RPG which can be played with the *Guitar Freaks* controller.

JIMMY WHITE'S 3 CUEBALL
Awesome/Virgin
The Whirlwind lends his name to the latest meticulous snooker simulation from Archer Maclean.

FORCE OF ONE
Qube Software/Virgin
A squad-based strategy title with arcade overtones, but loads of impressive explosions.

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING
LucasArts/Activision
Bizarre racing game, with all the *Episode One* chaps competing across a series of familiar circuits in a *Mario Kart*-style.

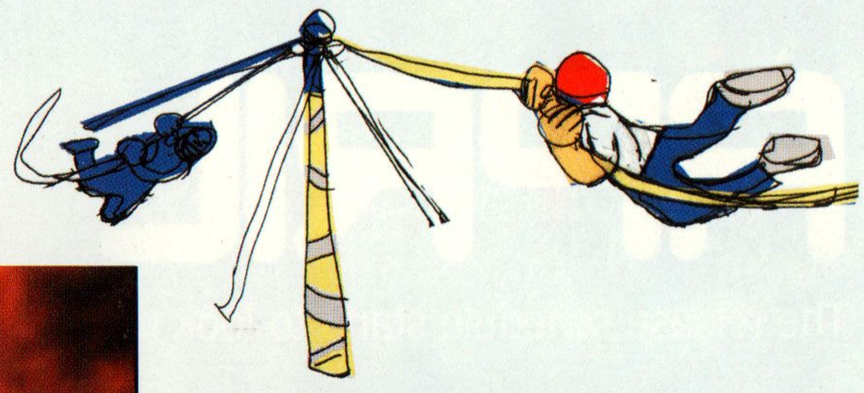
COOL BOARDERS: CODE ALIEN
UEP/SCEE
SCEE's long-running snowboarder offers a range of characters and racing styles.

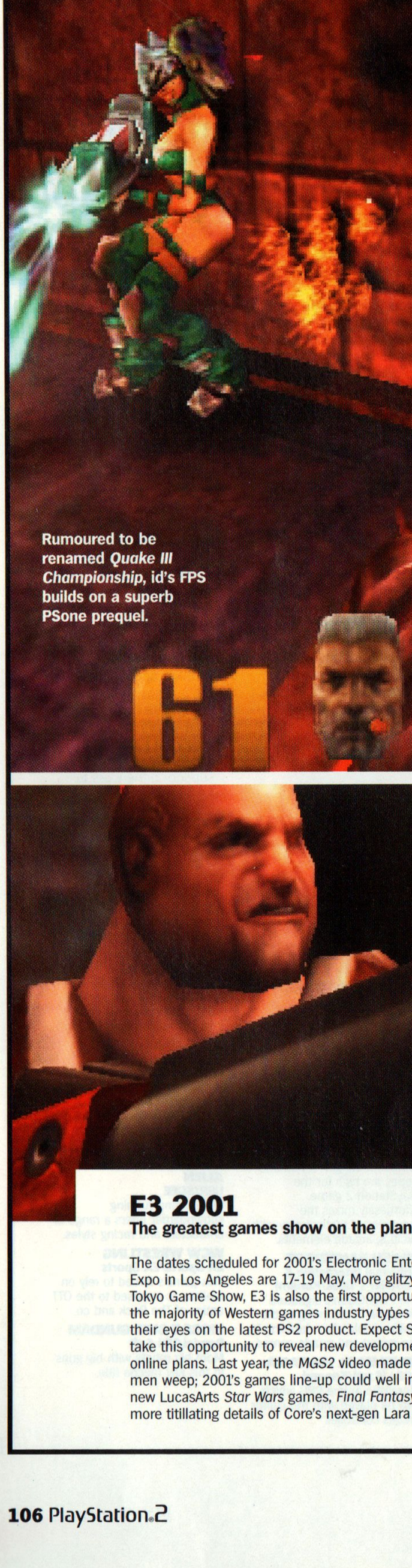
WCW WRESTLING
EA Sports/EA Sports
This game's forced to rely on realism as opposed to the OTT antics of The Rock and co.

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM
Bandai/Ubi Soft
More big robots with big guns in this key mecha title.

MAY

Time to look to the future as E3 reveals a host of brand new games.





Rumoured to be renamed *Quake III Championship*, id's FPS builds on a superb PSone prequel.

61

STEP INTO THE ARENA

QUAKE III: ARENA

Bullfrog/EA

The word 'classic' tends to lose its meaning in videogame circles, with virtually every half-decent title labelled as such. Legends, on the other hand, are somewhat rarer. *Quake III: Arena* is a legend.

The first-person shoot-'em-up series has been unleashing gun-based chaos on the PC circuit for the last five or six years. Set within a succession of 3D worlds within which players can roam freely between levels, fall through holes and blow seven shades out of a host of computer-controlled adversaries, *Quake* was the game that inspired, amongst others, *Unreal Tournament* and *TimeSplitters*.

***Quake III: Arena* continues the idea of exploring the first-person viewed 'seek and destroy' killathons, but with the emphasis more on bumping off mates than single-player japes. How this will be achieved on PlayStation 2 has yet to be confirmed, but initial indications are that EA is following *Unreal Tournament*'s lead with a split-screen mode to facilitate the essential multiplayer competitions. *Quake III: Arena*'s pedigree is the finest possible and the PlayStation 2 game is in the safe hands of Bullfrog. Expect the legend – and multiple killings – to continue apace.**

ALSO OUT IN MAY



WIPEOUT FUSION

SCEE Studio Liverpool/ SCEE

Not only does *WipEout Fusion* mark the welcome return of the franchise that helped establish the PSone, but it also tells of lessons learned. While the idea of a race game that supplants the usual cars and bikes in favour of futuristic, hovering craft is less of an eye-opener due to three PSone sequels, don't be fooled into thinking *Fusion* is a tarted-up remake. If anything, it indicates that the preceding versions barely scratched the surface of what the Liverpudlian development team intended. And as the craft belt along intricately detailed courses, the sheer speed and control afforded by the PS2 game will make it as fresh and original as it was five years ago.



DARK CLOUD

SCEI/SCEE

A pinch of role-playing, a snifter of adventuring and a soupçon of magic form the key ingredients in this unusual quest title. *Dark Cloud* casts the player as a young farmer called Toran who wakes one morning to find his entire town has mysteriously been suspended above the rest of the planet. As the mystery unfolds, players embark on a lengthy mission to unite the locals against the demon responsible for the town's elevation. The 3D world is truly adaptable and during the course of the game, Toran manipulates the land to create rivers, mountains and towns, in order to counter attacks from the demon. Odd, but engrossing.

AND...

APE ESCAPE 2
SCEI/SCEE
New version of the brilliantly deranged PSone monkey chase game.

THE THING
Universal/Konami
John Carpenter's classic horror tale of an alien creature at large in Arctic base.

KENGO
Lightweight/Ubi Soft
Brutally realistic samurai game developed by members of Square's respected *Bushido Blade* team.

EVIL TWIN
Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft
Sibling rivalry is rife in this cute adventure.

ONI
Bungie/Take 2
Anime and action collide head-on as fit female heroine Konoko kicks butt.

SHADOWMAN 2: 2ECOND COMING
Acclaim Teeside/Acclaim
Dark adventure sequel detailing one man's fight against Hell's minions.

TIGER WOODS PGA GOLF 2001
EA Sports/EA Sports
Latest incarnation of top-selling golf series.

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR
Jester Interactive/ Codemasters
Produce your own dance track, with drumbeats, loops and samples.

NBA HOOPZ
Midway/Midway
Arcade-style basketball knockabout.

E3 2001

The greatest games show on the planet.

The dates scheduled for 2001's Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles are 17-19 May. More glitzy than the Tokyo Game Show, E3 is also the first opportunity for the majority of Western games industry types to feast their eyes on the latest PS2 product. Expect Sony to take this opportunity to reveal new developments in its online plans. Last year, the *MGS2* video made grown men weep; 2001's games line-up could well include the new LucasArts *Star Wars* games, *Final Fantasy X* and more titillating details of Core's next-gen Lara game.

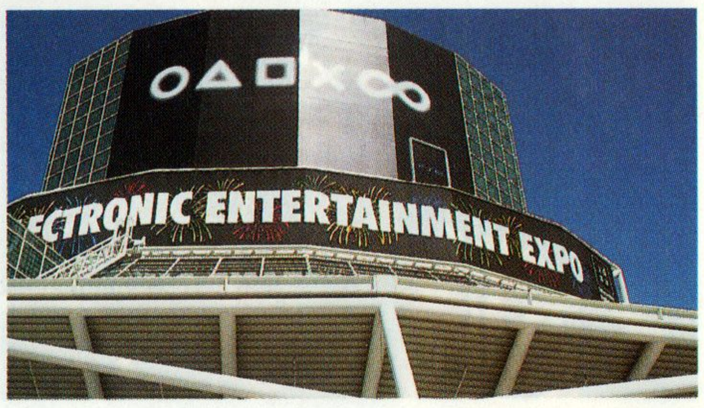
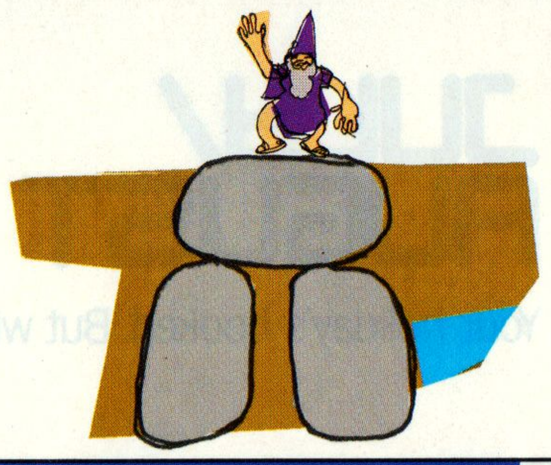


PHOTO: GAVIN ROBERTS

JUNE

Stay away from the harmful rays of the sun and enter the darkness of *Code Veronica*.





BRING OUT YOUR DEAD

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

Capcom/Capcom Eurosoft

The *Resident Evil* games are the console equivalents to video nasties. In these days of insipid, self-aware horror films, *Resident Evil* revels in its neck-biting zombies, horrific mutations and plentiful bloodletting. The strong mix of adventuring, action and puzzle elements, along with the series' cinematic appearance have taken sales of the three PSone games to over 30 million worldwide. As such, it was only a matter of time before series heroes Jill Valentine and Chris Redfield made their PlayStation 2 debut.

Thus, as Capcom busies itself on an all-new title designed solely for the new Sony system (see *Devil May Cry*) the interim period is to be bridged by an enhanced 'complete' version of the Dreamcast epic, *Code: Veronica* – the fourth and most chilling instalment in the series. Once again, Jill Valentine is left to juggle weapons, fend off the undead and unravel a mystery, but the shocks come thick and fast. It is unlikely that Capcom will rectify the inherent minor niggles that plague the series (restrictive movement being the main gripe) but as an introduction to a renowned series, *Veronica* will be a hot date.

A stop gap before *Devil May Cry*, Mikame's latest zombie chiller sees the return of Jill Valentine (not pictured).

THE SPORTING CALENDAR

Without the Olympic Games or any major football tournaments this year, which sporting events will inspire the videogame licencees in 2001?

28 January The Superbowl (see *Madden NFL 2001*, EA Sports)

4 March The Australian Grand Prix (see *Formula One 2001*, SCEE/*F1 Racing Championship*, Video System)

25 May: Champions League Final (see *UEFA Champions League*, Take 2/*UEFA 2001*, Infogrames)

25 June-8 August Wimbledon fortnight (let's hope for PSone hit *Smash Court Tennis 3*, Namco)

15-22 July British Open (see *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001*, EA Sports)

August TBC: NatWest Cricket Trophy Final (maybe a *Cricket 2001* from EA Sports or a new *Brian Lara Cricket* game from Codemasters?)

September TBC: British Touring Car Championships (a new *TOCA* game from Codemasters)

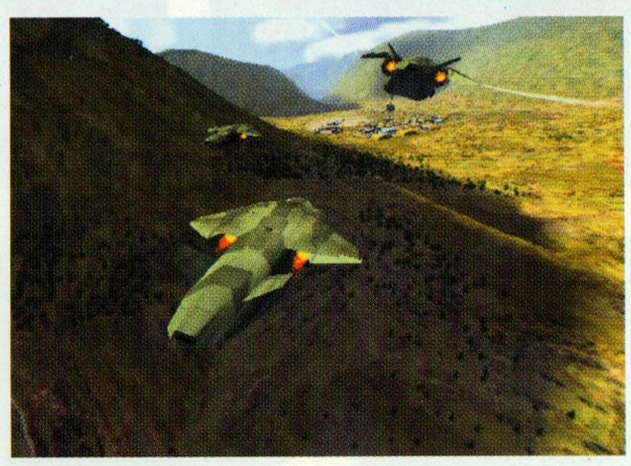
22-25 November The Rally of Great Britain concludes the World Rally Championship season (see *World Rally Championship 2001*, Evolution Studios/*Colin McRae Rally 3*, Codemasters)



Can Jenson Button upset the Ferrari F1 mafia?

PHOTO: ALLSPORT

ALSO OUT IN JUNE



DROPSHIP

SCEE Studio Camden/SCEE

Inspired by the troop carriers in James Cameron's *Aliens*, *Dropship* is half strategy/half combat simulation. Players pilot the Dropships as they deploy troops in an ongoing battle against an unnamed enemy. From here, the action switches to ground level as the land-based troops are sent on additional missions to take out compounds or key strategic points. The most impressive element of *Dropship* is its sense of scale. The play area is immense; allowing players to see dangers appear from miles away, which aids tactical decisions, meaning troops can be dropped from a safe distance. Looks to be a thoroughly original and engaging title.



UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Silicon Dreams/Take 2

Sitting somewhere between the glossy production values of *FIFA* and the total control offered by *ISS*, Take 2's *Champions League* is something of an unsung hero. Thankfully, the 2001/2002 edition should rectify this, with developers Silicon Dreams sticking to the same tried and tested formula of a quick passing game coupled with intelligent player AI. If the PS2 game has the same footballing brain of its PSone predecessors, then *Champions League* could finally start to challenge the big two's league domination. It currently plays very well indeed, but it's just a pity that not all English league teams will be represented.

AND...

HALF-LIFE
Gearbox/Havas
Arguably the best of the 'big three' first-person shooters. And it's coming to PS2!

AGE OF EMPIRES 2
Microsoft/Konami
As part of the deal that saw *Metal Gear Solid* head to PC, Konami got this historical strategy title in return.

F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX
Video System/Konami
The developer has a good pedigree of Formula One games, but can the latest incarnation overtake a crowded field?

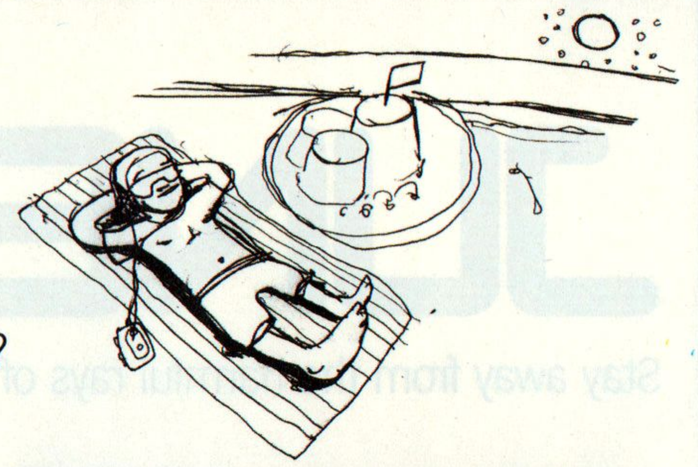
WING OVER 3
Taito/JVC
Latest in unloved air combat series.

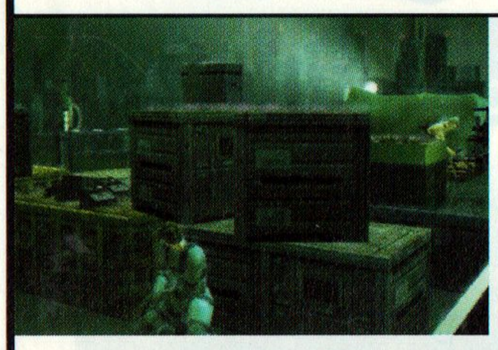
TOP GUN: INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY
Titus/Titus
Dogfights abound in this game based on cheesy 1984 Tom Cruise vehicle.

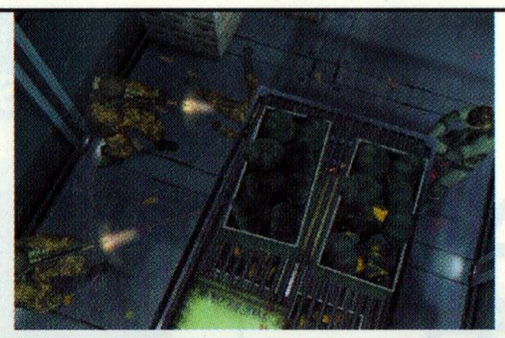
TITANIUM ANGELS
Mobius/SCi
An alternative Earth is being torn apart by human and biomechanial factions. Pick either side in a stylish, plot-heavy 3D action game.

JULY/AUGUST

Your holiday's booked. But will you venture abroad or just stay in and play *MGS2*?











SNEAKING AROUND IS GOOD FOR YOUR STEALTH

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

KCEJ (West)/Konami

Hang on to your hats, because this is the undoubted high point of the 2001 PlayStation 2 calendar. Since Hideo Kojima unveiled a three-minute demo in LA earlier this year, the need for information on *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty* has escalated. And it's easy to see why. Kojima has a knack for things cinematic and a skill for intuitive gameplay, the key to *MGS2*. It looks good, but gameplay has not been sacrificed in the slightest. If anything, the two elements enjoy a symbiotic relationship, with the incredible detail of the graphics adding depth to the game's use of stealth to sneak around its many military compounds, while the flip side is that the gameplay also showcases some stunning visual ideas.

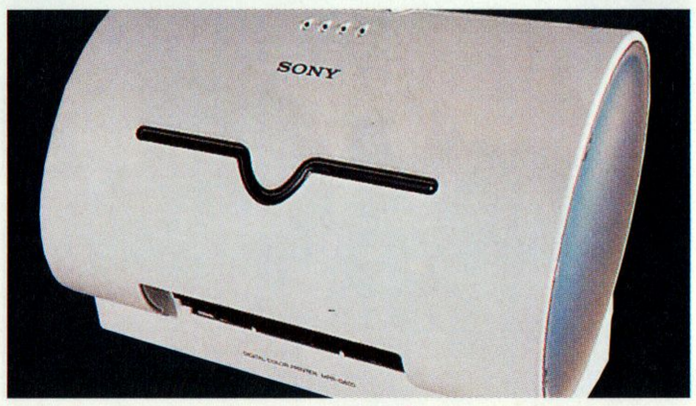
Via a complex plot, the player guides Snake Solid through some of the most detailed stages imaginable. The dull grey of a battleship, for example, becomes unimaginably pretty thanks to stark halogen lighting and pouring rain, while the sodden guards are hunched and unenthusiastic. As Snake picks off his foes, little touches become apparent. Shine a torch into a guard's eyes and he will be temporarily stunned and open for the kill. Similarly, during heated gun battles, marvel as scratches appear in the walls and the noise alerts other nearby guards. Book your month off now.

Altogether now... BEHIND YOU! Kojima's masterpiece is sneaking our way. Demo soon!

HARDWARE IN 2001

PS2 technology is revolutionising gaming.

The PopEgg is already out in Japan (see page 68) but Sony has yet to confirm a UK release date. Software will also use the Picture Paradise function of the Cyber-shot digital cameras (the DSC-P1 is released in January). The most important hardware development will be the PS2 Hard Disk Drive/broadband modem package for high quality Internet access and online gaming to kick-start the era of downloadable content. SCEE Director of Technology Paul Holman predicts a summer release but politics may push it back further in the year.



ALSO OUT IN JULY/AUG



THE GETAWAY
SCEE Team Soho/SCEE

SCEE's Soho studio is busy on one of the most ambitious and potentially controversial PlayStation 2 titles. A crime boss kidnaps a professional bank robber's son in order to blackmail him for 'one last job'. This is just an aside, though, because the key to *The Getaway* is that the team has faithfully recreated over 40km of London locations for use in the game. As such, players will be forced to work around traffic jams, use real short cuts and use any means necessary to get away from a job. The game's version of London is nothing short of amazing and, as the plot starts to twist, *The Getaway* drags the player into a truly involving experience. It's going to be massive, mark our words.



ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS
Capcom/ Capcom Eurosoft

Set in 16th Century Japan, *Onimusha* is another spin-off from Capcom's 'Survival Horror' range. However, while it uses the same kind of camera angles and cinematic cut-sequences as *Resident Evil, Dino Crisis* et al, the move into bamboo huts, open fields and elaborate palaces makes for a very fresh game indeed. An abundance of slash-'em-up action provides a more immediate experience and you'll have to face multiple mutant adversaries. The plot revolves around samurai Samanosuke's infiltration of the palace of a shogun with supernatural powers. *Onimusha*'s gripping mix of exploration and fighting will ensure it won't fall on its own sword.

AND...

ALONE IN THE DARK
Darkworks/Infogrames
Victorian romp, with one of two heroes exploring a castle rife with inhuman creatures.

UEFA 2001
Infogrames/Infogrames
Arcade-style football, featuring a host of European teams. Past versions have been rather shallow, though.

JURASSIC PARK 3
Universal/Konami
The third in the *JP* series is currently filming. As for the game, we know little.

LOTUS CHALLENGE
Kuju/Virgin
An accurate circuit-racing sim is promised, which should excite the petrolheads.

SKY GUNNER
SCEI/SCEE
Power Stone meets *Pilot Wings* in this oddball air combat lark.

TEST DRIVE 2001
Accolade/EA
One of the oldest racing series is given a PS2 overhaul.

RIVAL SCHOOLS 3
Capcom/Capcom Eurosoft
Third iteration of the insanely entertaining school playground beat-'em-up.

CARRIER: THE NEXT MUTATION
Jaleco/TBA
Resident Evil wannabe whose first outing proved popular on Dreamcast in Japan.

GOEMON ACTION RPG
Konami/Konami
The pineapple-haired hero moves out of his usual platform domain into RPG territory.

RED
KCET/Konami
War strategy pitting allies versus Nazis in an alternate reading of post-WW2 Japan. Big robots feature heavily.

VIP
Southpeak/Ubi Soft
Action title based on the shoddy Pam Anderson TV series.

SPRINT CAR OUTLAWS
Ratbag/SCEE
Stock car racing game – big collisions are the order of the day.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK
989 Studios/SCEE
Weapon-laden ice cream vans, tanks and Buicks do battle within city environments.

STARSKY & HUTCH
Empire/Empire
The Seventies cop series that inspired *Driver* fights back with its own car chase spin-off.

TOUR DE FRANCE
Konami/Konami
The annual bike race is given the console treatment.

PHOTO: JAMES HACKER

SEPTEMBER/ OCTOBER

This year's autumn harvest yields *GTA3* and the long-awaited *Starfighter*.



A LITTLE BIT WOOH, A ONE-MAN CRIME WAVE

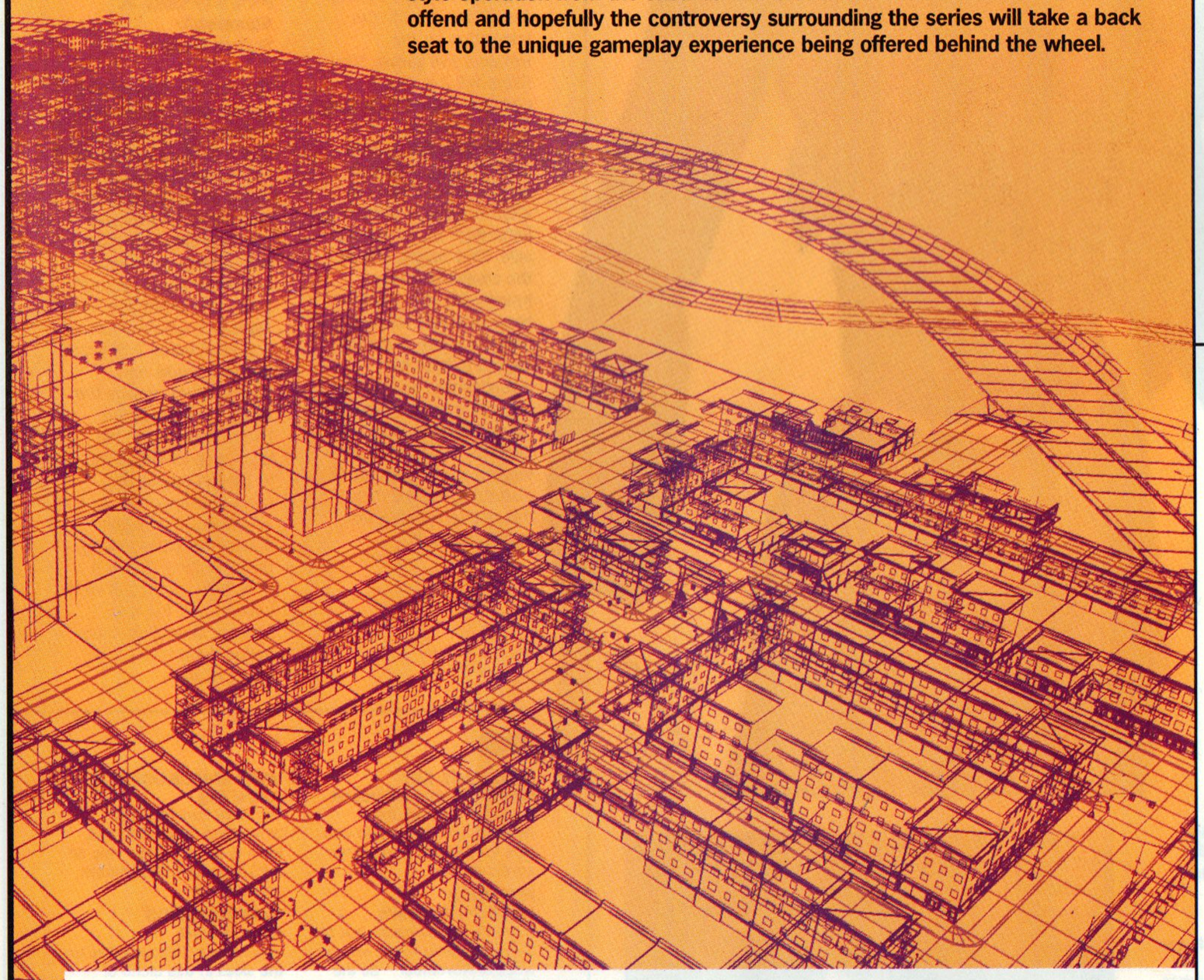
GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

DMA Design/Take 2

Doubling the amount of illegal activity taking place on PS2 at a stroke will be *Grand Theft Auto 3*, the title that looks dimly upon any kind of civilised and law-abiding behaviour. The aim is the same as the first two popular PSone games – you'll find yourself hotwiring motors, running errands for the mob and gradually building yourself a rep in the urban underworld. PS2's power has not been neglected, however – *GTA3* takes place entirely in 3D.

You'll notice parts of PSone game while you play: when shaking the fuzz off your tail, it's *Driver*, and when you're out on the streets waving your piece around, it's *Urban Chaos*. The game takes place in one massive city of three distinct districts, based loosely on the New York boroughs of Brooklyn and Manhattan with a bit of New Jersey for good measure. Beginning as a lowly hand-for-hire to the local pimps, you'll eventually be running a Tony Soprano-style operation from the suburbs. The creators are keen to amuse rather than offend and hopefully the controversy surrounding the series will take a back seat to the unique gameplay experience being offered behind the wheel.

"Honestly, Officer, he just looked like me..." Take to the mean streets in Rockstar's finest.



ECTS 2001

The European answer to E3.

Held on 2-4 September the European Computer Trade Show, this year moves to ExCeL in London's Docklands. ECTS is the chance for European developers and publishers to shine. However, last year many companies organised their own events around the time of ECTS, putting the relevance of a 2001 ECTS into question. Let's hope that the PS2 games being produced in the UK by Codemasters, Core, Criterion, SCEE's internal studios and others can prove they're as good as anything coming out of Japan and America.



PHOTO: GAVIN ROBERTS

ALSO OUT IN SEPT/OCT



STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER

LucasArts/Activision

At last, a decent looking *Star Wars* game. Set within the Lucasverse, but not restrained by the goings-on of *Episode One* or the other three, *Starfighter* is a 3D space opera first and a *Star Wars* game second. A total of 14 stages, each inspired by events in *The Phantom Menace* unfold as a series of dogfights, during which craft recognisable from the films, are blown to bits in exquisite detail. A typically polished LucasArts presentation rounds off a very promising title, while a large supporting cast fleshes out the developing plot.



HERDY GERDY

Core/Eidos

Core Design show their lighter side with an adventure that takes in sheep rearing and magic. Gerdy, the central hero, is a shepherd who enters a contest to win a magical staff. However, a villainous local keeps cheating, so Gerdy explores the locale looking for ways to second-guess him. What follows is a lavish exploration of the game's rolling hills, with Gerdy befriending people and learning how to play musical instruments that make herding the animals easier. Interaction with the other inhabitants and tough game tasks ensure that this only looks soft. Inside, it's as hard as nails.

AND...

BLACK & WHITE
Lionhead/EA
Coming in two separate versions: evil and good. On buying either, players grow and develop a good or bad monster and then act saintly or smash everything up.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
Neversoft/Activision
This title will make extensive use of the analogue pad to allow for even more fancy tricks and spins.

CHAMPIONSHIP MOTOCROSS 2001
Funcom/THQ
Scrambling star Ricky Carmichael again lends his name to this latest dirt biking bonanza.

RUN LIKE HELL
Digital Mayhem/Interplay
Action adventure in which an alien invasion must be thwarted, with Lance Henrikson and Clancy Brown lending vocals.

BALDUR'S GATE: LEGENDS
Bioware/Interplay
The first appearance of Interplay's celebrated *AD&D* title on PlayStation 2.

DRUM MANIA/GUITAR FREAKS
KCEJ (West)/Konami
Follow complex drum and guitar solos on the special Bemani controllers.

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2001
SCEE Team Soho/SCEE
Promises motion-captured players and a simple but effective passing and distribution system.

STUNTMAN
Reflections/Infogrames
Driver creators turn their attentions to PS2 with a driving game that involves hazardous movie stunts.

ROBOCOP
Titus/Titus
The Kevlar-covered cop is wheeled out for an all-new adventure.

GALLEON
Confounding Factor/Interplay
An epic tale of buckles being swashed developed by original Lara Croft creator, Toby Gard.

MICRO MANIACS 2
Codemasters/Codemasters
Still no cars, but the biped critters return to sprint across household surfaces.

TENCHU 3
Sony Music Japan/Activision
Third in the sneaky martial arts adventure series which proved popular on PSone.

STAR WARS: OBI WAN
LucasArts/Activision
A *Dark Forces*-style adventure set within the *Episode One* time frame – lightsabers out.

SYPHON FILTER 3
989 Studios/SCEE
A more instant alternative to *Metal Gear Solid 2*.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3
Codemaster/Codemasters
Work has begun on a PS2 version of the best-selling PSone rally sim.

EXTERMINATION
Whoopee Camp/SCEE
Panic action game involving aliens at the South Pole.

NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER

Lara's back, amazingly just in time for Christmas shopping...



TOO DARK, TOO DARK ALTOGETHER...

NEXT-GENERATION LARA

Core Design/Eidos Interactive

She's coming. Hot on the heels of her cinema debut, Lara Croft finally tumbles on to PS2 in November, but my how she's grown. The as-yet untitled PS2 incarnation of the *Tomb Raider* franchise will bear only the smallest resemblance to Lara's past catacomb-based escapades, with Core looking to develop both the character and the gameplay.

Details are rarer than the artefacts that Ms Croft spends much of her – and our – time recovering, but Core has hinted at more expansive quests. An early demo showcased a mission with Lara exploring the Louvre art gallery, while promises of secondary characters (a love interest?) have been bandied about. Core Design's boss, Jeremy Smith, has also stated he would like to enhance the interaction elements of the game, with Lara entering cities and questioning people to glean clues for later use. The idea of episodic gaming, in conjunction with the new PS2 Hard Disk Drive and modem package, has been raised. Also, expect Lara to abandon the traditional shorts and T-shirt combo, in favour of a new look.

Whatever Core decides, Lara's next outing could be the most important of her life – we'd lay good odds on the fact that it will also be her best.



New costume, new modelling, new script, different approach... Cynics beware! Lara means business on PS2.

ALSO OUT IN NOV/DEC



SILENT HILL 2

KCET/Konami

If George Romero's *Living Dead* films provide the inspiration for the *Resident Evil* games, then *Silent Hill 2* is most certainly David Cronenberg territory. James Sunderland, the game's unlikely hero, enters the eerie town of Silent Hill after receiving a disturbing letter from his deceased wife. Thus begins one of the creepiest games imaginable, with Konami's team of artists working to create a game world that shocks in both its inventiveness and the all-pervading sense of evil that permeates the dingy interiors. Clever use of fogging and an assault of disturbing images make this one to watch – from behind the sofa.

FINAL FANTASY X

Squaresoft/ Square Europe

The *Final Fantasy* games did the unthinkable and showed casual gamers that role-playing titles need not be the domain of geeks. Instead, Square's epic series had visually amazing titles, crammed with dozens of diverse adventure elements and believable characters. Final *Fantasy X* will be Square's first PlayStation 2 RPG and realistic figures and locations will replace the kawai graphics of the PSone series. With the team also looking closely to tighten the woolly combat sequences of past *FF* games, once again Square will be redefining the RPG genre. Sadly, it now looks as though we'll have to wait for *Final Fantasy XI* until Square's online dreams become sweet reality.

AND...

DEVIL MAY CRY
Capcom/Capcom Eurosoft
Shinji Mikami sets the *Resident Evil* universe to one side for this gothic, demonic adventure.

FIFA 2002
EA Sports/EA Sports
Currently unconfirmed, but it's likely to appear in the second week of November – all the others have.

DINO CRISIS 3
Capcom/Capcom Eurosoft
Resi's reptilian relative heralds the return of Regina.

SUPERMAN
Infogrames Sheffield/ Infogrames
Details are a little sketchy, but an arcade/adventure title showcasing SM's laser eyes and super strength is likely.

SPY HUNTER
Paradigm Entertainment/ Midway
Update of the ancient driving/espionage caper.

WWF SMACKDOWN 3
Jukes/THQ
The WWF franchise has blossomed under THQ and work is already under way on a PS2 sequel with Digimask compatibility.

THUNDERBIRDS
Deep Red/SCi
International Rescue takes to the skies in this blend of strategy game ideas.

GUNSLINGER
Surreal Software/Activision
A classic tale of revenge set in the Wild West, ideal for those with itchy trigger fingers.

STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE
Pipedream/Majesco
Conversion of excellent PC first-person shooter based on the *Voyager* universe.

LEGION: LEGEND OF EXCALIBUR
7 Studios/Midway
Authentic Arthurian swords and sorcery romp.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2002

***OPS2* impersonates Mystic Meg to predict the the games we could be playing in 2002.**

ISS PRO EVOLUTION
KCET/Konami
The ultimate football game will definitely be wending its way to PS2 eventually.

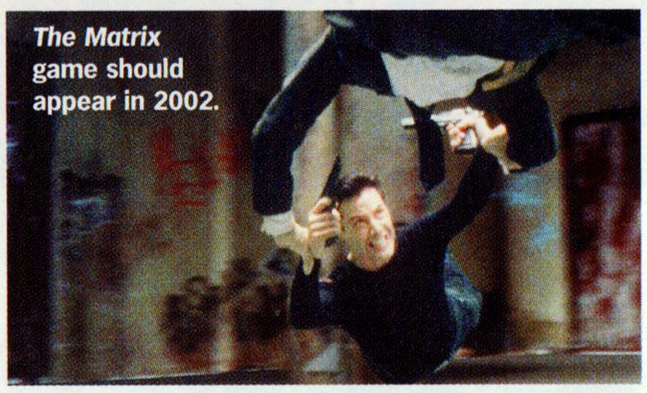
GRAN TURISMO 4
Polyphony Digital/Sony
Kazunori Yamauchi has already hinted at plans for a fourth game. Unhappy with enhancing the PSone game's mechanics in *GT3*, Yamauchi-san is planning a unique new control system.

THE MATRIX
Shiny Entertainment/ Interplay
Work is underway an action title based on the Keanu Reeves cyberflick. Details are scarce, but word is that the rotational combat sequences will take centre stage.

STAR WARS GALAXIES
Verant/LucasArts/Sony Online Entertainment
The online *Star Wars* RPG you always wanted to play.

KESSEN 2
Koei/TBC
The sequel to the epic strategy title will feature even more soldiers on-screen.

WORLD CUP 2002
EA Sports/EA Sports
EA Sports holds the rights to the official licences of the next two World Cups, so expect to see its *FIFA* engine rehashed yet again.



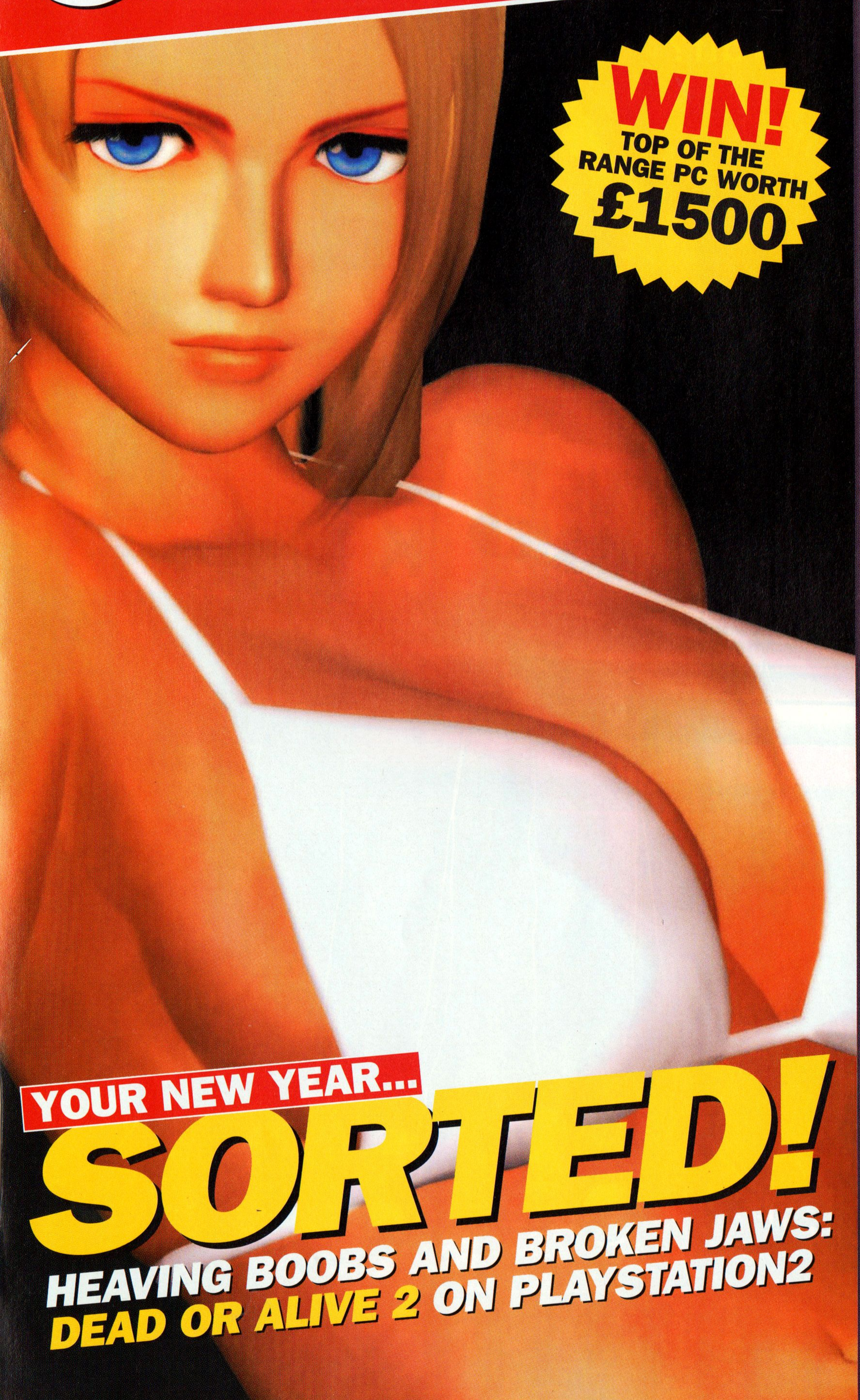
***The Matrix* game should appear in 2002.**

FINAL FANTASY XI
Squaresoft/Square Europe
Square is keen to take its franchise online, so expect this game to be the first to offer a huge multiplayer quest.

EVERQUEST
Verant/SCEE
Everquest is a huge online role-playing universe where users can go solo or team up with anyone online. SCEE owns a stake in Verant and is keen to propel PS users online – this will be the perfect bait.

PHOTO: KOBAL COLLECTION/WARNER BROS

Video Gamer



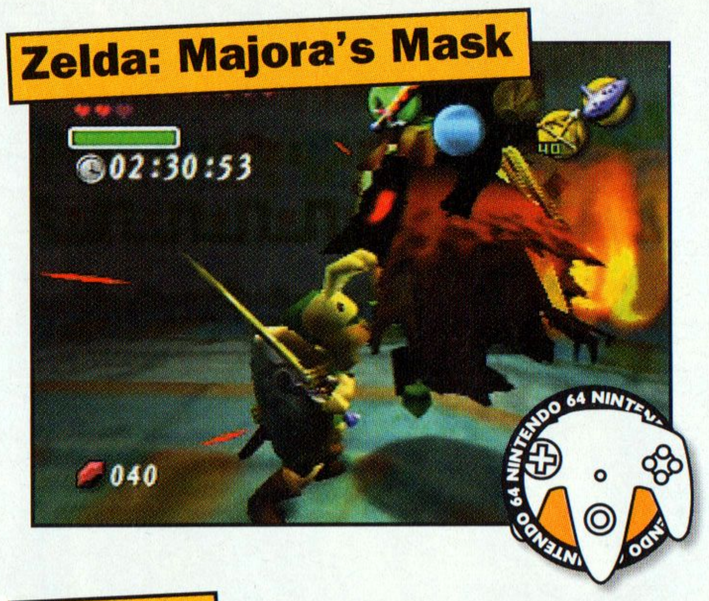
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HEAVING BOOBS AND BROKEN JAWS: DEAD OR ALIVE 2 ON PLAYSTATION2

Zelda: Majora's Mask



F1 2000



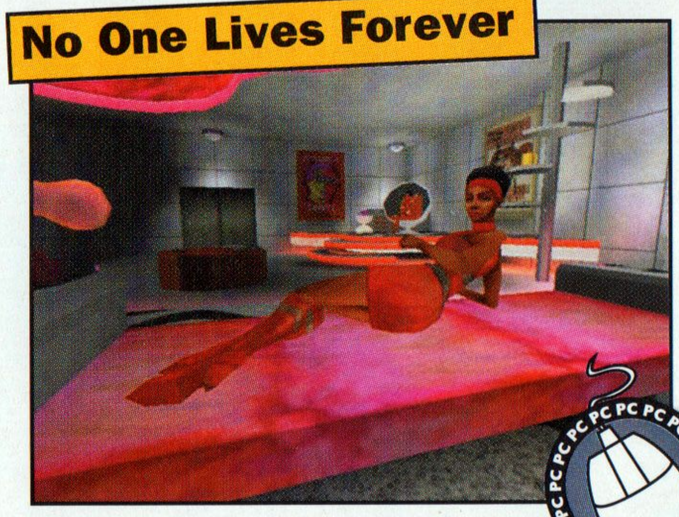
Rayman Revolution



Samba de Amigo



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JUST MARRIED

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MOTO GP

Four wheels good, two wheels *bad*...

››See over for our exclusive UK review of Namco's tough rider.

REVIEWS

The World's Greatest PlayStation 2 Game Buyer's Guide

Our ratings

If it's for PlayStation 2, and heading for a store near you, we've played it, argued about it, and, ultimately, judged it. Every issue, we look at the latest games and rate them out of 10, like so:

10/10	Utterly essential
9/10	Hugely satisfying and entertaining
8/10	Highly recommended. Definitely worth your money
7/10	Good, solid fare, and well worth a gander
6/10	Decent enough, and fine for fans of the genre
5/10	Of some merit
4/10	Poor, but may still have the odd moment
3/10	Extremely disappointing
2/10	To be avoided
1/10	Beer mat

OFFICIAL PlayStation 2 MAGAZINE

STAR PLAYER

StarPlayer
Awarded to any game that gets 9/10 or over. This is just our little way of trying to hammer home what is a fairly simple message: Get this game, and get it now.

Issue three: new releases

114	Moto GP
120	Theme Park World
124	F1 Championship Season 2000
128	Street Fighter EX3
131	Disney's Dinosaur
132	Gungriffon Blaze
134	Silpheed
136	Dragon's Lair 1 & 2
139	Hologram Time Traveller


AGV
SUZUKI



MOTO GP

A month or so after *Ridge Racer V*, Namco's back in the racing ring – but this time it's two wheels short.

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Namco
Price: £44.99
Players: 1-2
Out: January/ February 2001
Web site: www.namco.com/console/titles/moto_gp.html

Back story
A substantial reworking of a relatively low-profile arcade game, *Moto GP* marks Namco's second wave of PS2 development. Will it prove popular enough to kickstart a new franchise?

If games publishers were explorers, Namco would be Christopher Columbus. Five years ago, virtually overnight, Namco discovered a brave new world – nay, a whole new dimension – hitherto unexplored within the realm of gaming. It would come to be known as The Third Dimension, and the vessel in which Namco sailed to this new world, across the PlayStationic Ocean, was known as the SS Ridge Racer. That one game defined the PlayStation, and thereupon heralded a new era in gaming. Without it we wouldn't have had a *WipEout* series, any *Gran Turismos*, or... well, you can pick your own favourite racer.

Alas, it was a feat Namco failed to repeat five years on. There can be few fans of the epoch-making original who weren't just a teensy weensy bit disappointed with *Ridge Racer V*. A rehash of its most recent PSone cousin, *RRV* bore the grotty hallmarks of 90% of all first-generation console software, and underlined the fact that Namco was still getting to grips with Sony's Emotion Engine. But all is not lost. In terms of early PS2 racers, Namco has a back-up. And its name is *Moto GP*.

It's probably fair to say that the definitive motorbike racing game has yet to happen. Ask someone to name a motorbike game, and the two that'll most likely crop up are *Super Hang On* and *Road Rash*. The former is an ancient arcade brand, while the latter is a fast-diminishing series of racers that put absurd cartoon violence above simulation. No, what gaming is lacking is a proper bike racing game. A simulation. A two-wheeled, Superbike version of *Gran Turismo*, if you like.

Like the aforementioned *Ridge Racer*, *Moto GP* began life as an arcade game. You'd be forgiven for not knowing that, though, as the arcade incarnation of *Moto GP* was known as *500GP*. The name change makes fair sense, however; *Moto GP* may be fast and accessible, but this is no two-minute, gooey 50-pence spurt of adrenaline. And that's a good thing. Sort of. Also, it's unlikely that *500GP* was considered to be anybody's favourite arcade racer. It wasn't a bad game, just a bit... bland. Like a bread sandwich.

This game however, wraps its legs around the engines of two beasts; the Kawasaki Arcademedo and the Honda Simulator. In other words, it attempts to combine the appeal of simulation with the thrill of arcade. It does.



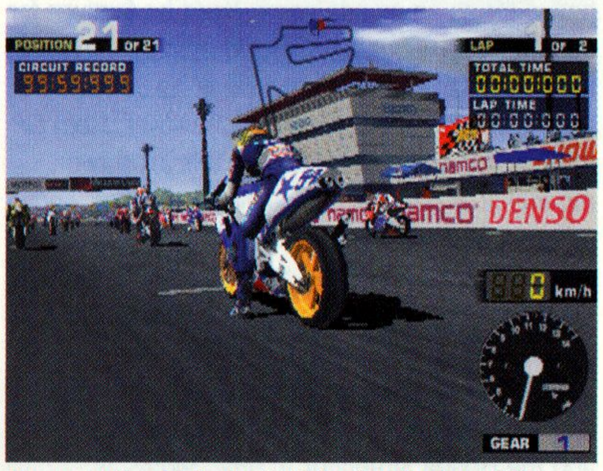
Travel too fast and get too close to an opponent and you're as good as dead.



Attention to detail is astonishing as *Moto GP*'s riders lean almost off their bikes as they approach a bend.



When travelling at a speed of 185 kph the minimum breaking distance is not, as you may have guessed, six inches from the vehicle in front.



For an extra kick start at the beginning of the race give that throttle an extra push and you'll be fired along like a rocket.

Before you even start playing *Moto GP* it's clear that this is a Namco game. From the opening fast-cut video sequence – all blipvert flashes of bikes, blokes strapping themselves into rigid leather, and spinning speedometers – to the slick menu screens, the crispness of the presentation will be familiar to anyone who's ever played a Namco game. Admittedly, it's a trifle soulless, but this isn't meant to be *Spyro The Dragon 4*.

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY

Nevertheless, the options menu throws up a couple of surprises. Beyond the usual control system variables and whatnot, you also get the option to play in widescreen, plus there are a number of viewpoints to choose from. In other games you have two viewpoints, which – as per the norm – can be switched between with the flick of a button. What's different here is that you choose the views before you start to play.

You get your usual, default first-person perspective and a behind-the-racer, third-person view. But the big surprise is that you can choose from five further viewpoints, ranging from camera angles that hover around the racer's ankle to a difficult to navigate rear view. Some are next to useless, it must be said, but several of the others such as the onboard camera lends a sense of urgency to proceedings.

At this stage, you'll also get the chance to name your biker (hooray for profanity), select a nationality (curiously, not from a predetermined list, you spell out your country's name yourself) and – steady now – choose a colour for your helmet.

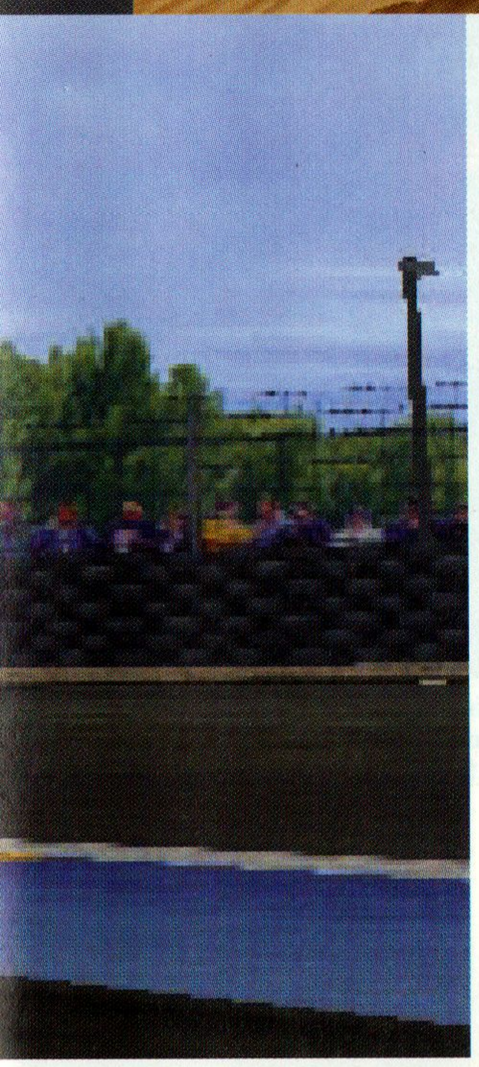
Gameplay-wise *Moto GP* features Season, Time Attack, multiplayer, Versus and Challenge modes, but in order to get a feel for the handling, it's always a good idea to start any racing game with the ubiquitous Arcade mode. And *Moto GP* is no exception. Kicking off with a quick race, you get the usual options: automatic or manual, arcade or simulation-style handling, whether you want a kph or mph speed read-out and a choice of real-world Superbikes in 125, 250 and 500cc classes from real-world manufacturers (Yamaha, Honda, Suzuki et al). You also get an immediate choice of five genuine, real-life Superbike circuits: Motegi, Jerez, Suzuka, Paul Ricard and our very own Donington. The usual bike game suspects, in other words.

The first thing you'll notice when playing – particularly if you've had experience of *Ridge Racer V* – is that Namco has evidently got to grips with the hardware. *RRV* was there for PS2's Japanese debut, and as such is almost a year older than *Moto GP*. Frankly, it shows.

Crisp, full-screen (or widescreen), pop-up free graphics, with draw distances as far as the virtual eye can see; this is what you wanted on your PS2. The bikes and riders are gorgeously modelled – even if some of the animation is a bit suspect. But subtle smoke and spark effects more than

//Admittedly it's a trifle soulless, but this isn't meant to be *Spyro The Dragon 4*//







Those great camera angles play a vital part in action replay sequences, bringing them to life with an amazing degree of realism.

compensate. The trackside detail is commendable; the drybrush grass lining Spain's dusty Jerez course, smoke from fireworks being let off in the crowds, row upon row of non-identical trailers and flapping flags... These are some of the things you won't notice in *Moto GP*, but they're hidden in there in glorious detail.

You see, like many of the best game graphics, the visual touches here are so subtle that you often won't notice them while you're playing. It takes a non-participant spectator to fully appreciate the lushness of *Moto GP*. There is some slight interlace flickering on the track markings and fences, but not so much that it'll ruin your day.

The visual loveliness is rammed home in the post-race replays. For the first few seconds you'll seriously wonder if you're watching video footage. The penny will only drop when you realise that the bike with your markings is taking the exact same route around the course as you did. The replay uses the same game engine, but heat haze, shaky camera and subtle lighting effects all are employed to bring you the most convincing racing game replays yet.

LEARN AND THEN EMBRACE

Perhaps part of the reason that you don't notice the in-game graphics is that, as a player, you'll have other things on your mind. *Moto GP* is not a game for, well, for *Ridge Racer* fans. There's no keeping your finger on the accelerator here; all the courses have 45- and 90-degree bends that demand you brake well in advance. In this respect, *Moto GP* plays like precious few other games.

Initially, you'll find this aspect annoying; most racing games make concessions to the boy racer in all of us, but here you have to learn to love the delights of deceleration, or you won't get anywhere. Similarly, it's crucial to take a sensible racing line. Weaving all over the track like a some maniacal motorcycle courier who's been overdoing it on the goofballs is not only going to lose you the race, it'll make you look really stupid in those replays. A fair tip for new players would be to hang back on your first few races and follow the line the leaders take – it should pay dividends.

However, annoying as *Moto GP* may be to play initially, the moment you start to accept the way it works, the gameplay will click. In theory, anyway. In fact, *Moto GP* feels so very right to play. The way in which you slow down as you approach a bend – making sure to keep an eye on the circuit map – and then accelerate away, weaving in and out of the other racers, is a joy to experience. Like all the best racing games, there's a steady but distinct learning curve, and it feels just right.

For all this, even with the simulation-style handling switched on, *Moto GP* can't shake off its arcade heritage. Depending on how much of a simulation purist you are will affect how much this annoys you. Also you may be slightly rankled by Namco's questionable decision to have portraits of the other racers – modelled as they are on genuine racers – hovering a foot or so above their heads. It spits on realism somewhat, and looks a little bizarre. Like a bunch of guys having a bike race, but with blow-up pictures of themselves mounted atop their helmets, in fact.

THE CAMERA NEVER LIES

Which of those *Moto GP* camera angles are the best? We tried them all. We recommend you don't...



Third-person
The default option, and probably the most useful of the lot. A steady camera, mounted just behind your racer.
Usefulness: 5/5



First-person
The secondary default view, the first-person perspective mounts the camera inside your driver's face. Great sense of speed, but can make it tricky to see the upcoming corners.
Usefulness: 4/5



Left side
The camera follows your bike around the track, from just behind your driver's left ankle. Surprisingly, it doesn't render the game unplayable. Just less playable.
Usefulness: 2/5



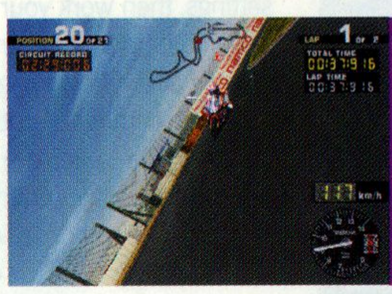
Right side
Somehow even less useful than the left-side camera angle. Why is this?
Usefulness: 1/5



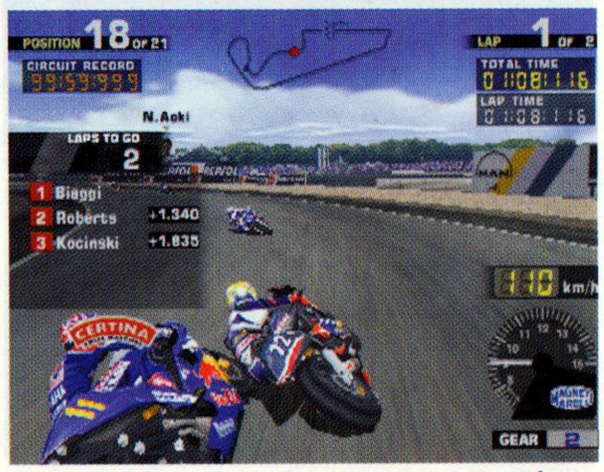
Onboard
Another take on the first-person viewpoint but doesn't compensate for the movement of your bike. Hence the camera swims around wildly. Not for the easily nauseous.
Usefulness: 2/5



Distant
A third-person perspective, but from much further away. It would've made the corners easier to spot, but the camera remains relatively low down.
Usefulness: 3/5



Rear
Effectively a rear-view mirror. Of use only to clairvoyants, or anyone who wants to really show off.
Usefulness: -5/5



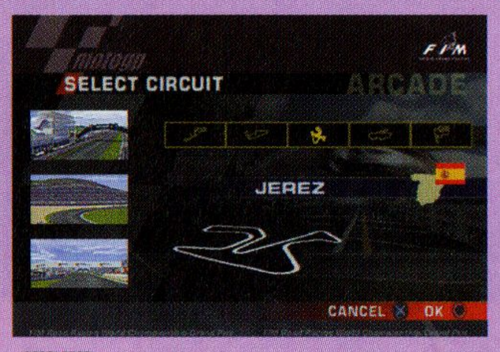
No matter how sharp the corners you must keep the pressure on your rivals. Or slow down deliberately to make them crash, it's up to you.

ON LOCATION

Use this easy guide to *Moto GP*'s tracks and you may just win the race.



MOTEGI
Location: Japan
Description: A nasty one – doubles back on itself several times. It's like trying to race around a bowl of noodles.
Difficulty: Hard



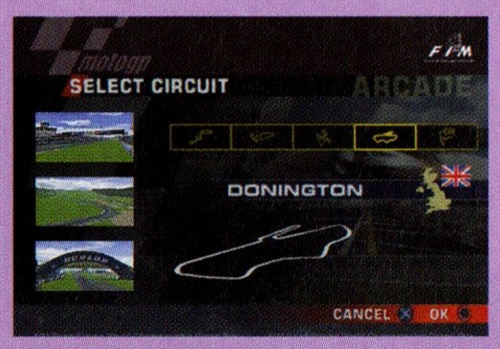
JEREZ
Location: Spain
Description: Fairly easy to master. A couple of straights to get up speed and a couple of average bends.
Difficulty: Medium



SUZUKA
Location: Japan
Description: A relatively straightforward track, broken up by four nasty bends – two at either end, and one down each straight.
Difficulty: Medium



PAUL RICARD
Location: France
Description: Two whopping great straights, but only one nasty turn. Can take you by surprise, however.
Difficulty: Easy-ish



DONINGTON
Location: UK
Description: Your pie-and-peas race track; the dullest of the bunch. Great for getting used to your bike, though.
Difficulty: Easy



Stick close to the other racers in order to earn the best racing line of the tracks. You'll soon be overtaking them (hopefully).



If you worry the guy in front too much he'll peer round to see where you are. Now is that attention to detail or what?

Moto GP plays similarly in the Season mode to how it does in Arcade mode, but there are restrictions that you don't get with the quick game. For starters, the choice of bikes is limited initially – perhaps a little pointlessly, given that most of them are readily available in Arcade mode – and once you have chosen your bike, the amount of tinkering and tweaking you'll be able to do to its engines, breaks and handling is similarly reigned in. In Arcade mode, you can tinker with most aspects of a bike's handling, and create a super-duper bike with just a few metaphorical twists of a virtual spanner.

Nevertheless, it's the Season mode that most players will turn to for their long-term thrills. It's your usual stuff; choose from easy, normal or hard settings, then work your way up the rankings in order to be declared King Of Superbikes 2001. Usually at the beginning of each season, you have to fulfil a number of criteria before you can progress. Fail to achieve the win conditions, and you're stuffed. If you perform well, and meet the goals, you can choose to continue with your current racing team, or defect to the opposition.

Yet it's the Challenge mode that'll prove to be the real long-term draw. As is the norm with most Namco games, *Moto GP* features tons of hidden extras – over 50 in fact – from new teams, bikes and bikers, to, er, pretty photographs of bikes. And bikers. And teams. Not a huge reward, maybe, but it's all about kudos, and rubbing your mates' noses in it when they haven't unlocked that highly desirable render of Tetsuya Harada. Whoever he may be. The challenges range from having to complete a certain course on a certain difficulty setting, to getting round a course within a time limit. They're generally pretty tough, but then they wouldn't be a challenge if they weren't.

It's just as well that there is a Challenge mode, though, because without it *Moto GP* would be a disappointingly short-lived affair. With only five tracks to speak of, and the season mode consisting of three – admittedly increasingly tough – seasons, you only have 15 races to play through in the basic one-player game. Yes, there are three difficulty levels, but the easy, normal and difficult settings would have been more accurately named 'very easy', 'still fairly easy', and 'a little bit tougher than the other two'. Yes, there is a Time Attack

//You can tinker with the bike's handling with a metaphorical twist of a virtual spanner//

YOUR GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL CORNERING

***Moto GP* requires a different cornering discipline to most racing games. Here's our guide to getting around the bends, without sending yourself, er, around the bend.**



1. When you're coming up to a bend, keep to the outside of the track. Use the track map for guidance.



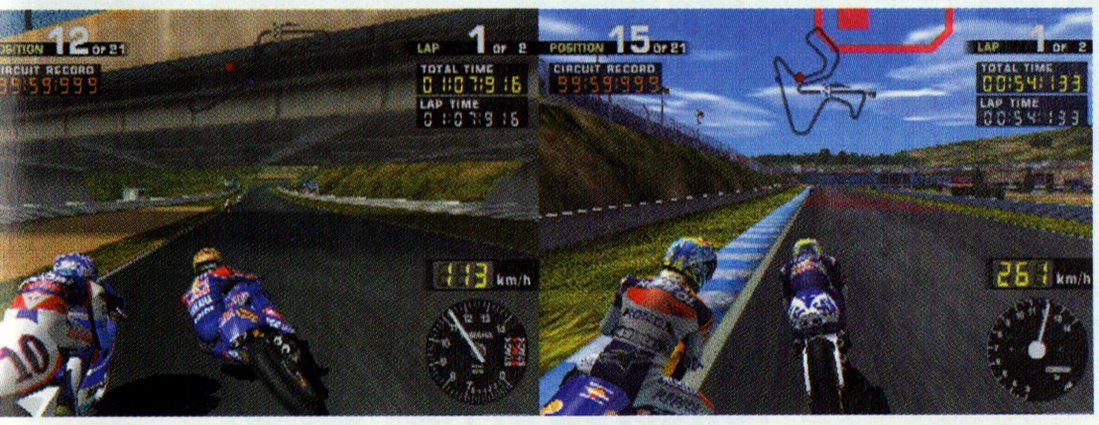
2. Take your finger off the accelerator button as you get nearer.



3. Brake if it's a sharp bend. Especially if you come off a straight.

Each bike has different attributes and it's up to you to find the one best suited for you.





To stop rivals coming up on the inside make sure you're always nudging the edge of the track.

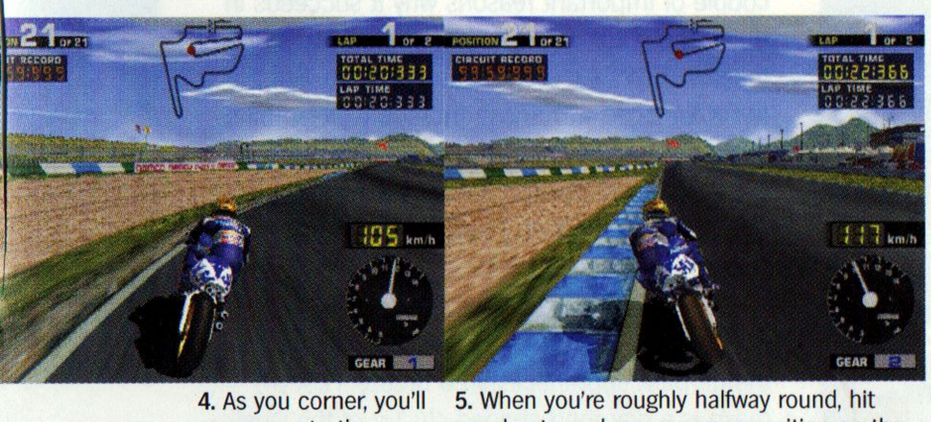
mode, but with just those five tracks you're going to be hard pressed to whip up the enthusiasm for extended sessions of time attacking. Similarly so with the two-player mode.

There are other problems with *Moto GP*. For instance, the in-race realism is patchy. Colliding with a barrier at 150mph sends both bike and rider flying across the track, while on the other hand clipping the back wheel of another racer does little more than cause both bikes to wobble slightly. Similarly, if you so much as leave the track for a split second, your bike decelerates at such a rate that we can only conclude Superbike tyres are constructed from Velcro, and Superbike race tracks are surrounded by woollen scenery. Fair enough that these bikes aren't built for off-roading, but 134mph to 14mph in one second? Your rider would be catapulted over the handlebars, and is likely to be smashed to smithereens upon contact with anything solid.

But, heck, *Moto GP* isn't a bad game. In fact it's a good one, and as far as racing games go it's one of the best on the PS2 so far. But if you're looking for a long-term simulation-type game, you'd be best off hanging on for *GT3*. ☐ **Paul Rose**



Matching bike and rider's outfit. How very a la mode.



4. As you corner, you'll cross over to the other side.

5. When you're roughly halfway round, hit accelerate and resume your position on the outside of the track.

MOTO GP

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Halfway to a racing game classic. A few more tracks and a little more originality in the gameplay would have made it much more appealing.
- Gorgeous visuals - The handling feels spot-on - Incredible race replays	- Falls halfway between simulation and arcade-style gameplay - Not the most long-lasting of games	

Graphics	Crisp, flawless and fast	08
Sound	Forgettable tunes, but reasonable engine noise	07
Gameplay	Once you get to grips with it, it feels great	07
Life span	Five tracks, and only a few game modes	06

07

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

NAMCO – A LIFE IN BIKES

***Moto GP* isn't the first bike-racer form Namco. Here's a pick of its best arcade bike-'em-ups.**

SUZUKA 8 HOURS
Released in 1992, and billed as a 'motorcycle simulator'. A bit grim by today's standards, but fine in its day.

CYBER CYCLES
The successor to *Suzuka 8 Hours*, *Cyber Cycles* employed Namco's System 22 board to produce some jazzy visuals.

PROP CYCLE
Absurd aerial bike racing that required the player to physically pedal a Da Vinci-style flying machine around an obstacle-strewn course.

DOWNHILL BIKERS
Gravity-fuelled, pedal cycle dirt track action. Superb stuff when two cabinets were linked together.

MOTOCROSS GO!
Best remembered for its four-player link-up, *Motocross Go!*'s undulating courses left you feeling like you'd been chewing on a mud sandwich.



THEME PARK WORLD

It's a gut-churning, ice-cream-dripping, overpriced gift-laden world. It's a *Theme Park World*. And you're in control.



Publisher: EA
Developer: Bullfrog
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: Now
Web site: www.themeparkworld.com

Back story
Theme Park World is not a new game. It began life on the PC and made a successful debut on the PSone earlier this year. No mean feat for a stereotypically non-console game with little real action and slow-burn gameplay. The PS2 incarnation is an evolution rather than a revolution.

When it gets to two in the morning and you're playing your way into yet another 'just ten more minutes' after a day fused to a Dual Shock 2, it's time to admit that a game has well and truly got under your skin. And it's a genuine compliment to the cartoon-stylings of *Theme Park World* that such a modest concept can be such a delight to play. And play. And play and play and...

You start your career as a theme park tycoon with an expanse of featureless land, an imposing entrance gate and $30,000 to play with. You then go about laying paths and placing features, rides, shops and restaurants, pausing only to hire staff and open the park to John and Janine Public and their hyperactive kids. From that moment on, success depends on satisfying the often mutually exclusive demands of your bottom line (making money) and the visitors to your park. Get the balance exactly right and you'll have the cash to expand your empire, upgrade existing attractions, research and build new rides and train your hardworking staff.

//Every visitor and ornamental fountain is rendered in real-time//

Get it right consistently and you'll win golden tickets that'll enable you to open a new park with a different theme on one of the adjacent islands in this leisure-mad archipelago. Altogether there are eight different parks to build in four different styles: Lost Kingdom, Halloween World, Space Zone and Wonder Land. Each has a unique selection of features to fill it – right down to animated, themed waste bins. As you can imagine, *TPW* comes with a large amount of inherent gameplay repetition, but there are a couple of important reasons why it succeeds in maintaining such a high level of playability. One of these is *TPW*'s excellent control system. But it also has a lot to do with those themed rubbish bins.

LIFE IS A ROLLER COASTER

This game requires no manual studying at all. In fact it's a perfect game for the terminally impatient. Pop the disc in, start it up and you'll immediately notice two features that make your theme park apprenticeship a breeze. First of these is a diamond-shaped cluster of the Dual Shock 2's action buttons depicted in the top right-



Now you can be a mind reader. If a visitor is having a blast, you can see it. If they're busting for a pee, you can see that too.



The real fun begins when you get to try out your own creations.

Once you've built a park, you can check it out from each and every possible angle.



Chips with everything. Don't forget to feed your visitors or they'll head for the exits.

STARWAY TO PROFIT

Four simple steps to starting up your successful theme park.

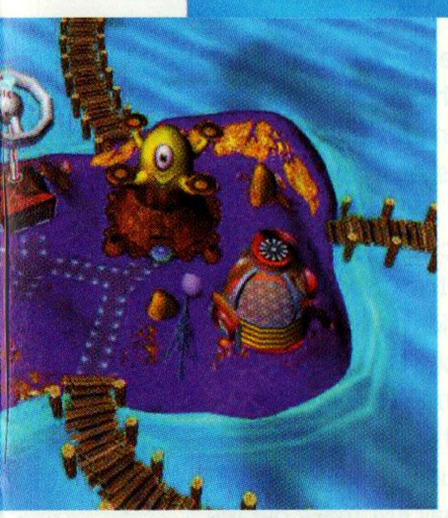
1. Check out the dimensions of your park and make a central boulevard, off which everything else will branch. Punters don't like to walk too far and you don't want to box yourself in.

2. Plaster the path near the entrance with restaurants, gift shops, toilets and sideshows. Visitors are very enthusiastic when they first enter the park – which leads to open wallets. Take advantage.

3. Resist the temptation to build showy roller coasters first. They're very expensive and take a while to set up. Go for a handful of smaller rides that'll keep your public happy before you hit 'em with the showstoppers.



4. Set the entry fee to around $60 and open the park. You're on your way.



Imagine a world made up of nothing but theme parks? You can now.

hand corner of the screen. These are labelled and re-labelled with different functions, depending on which part of the game you're accessing. Their default functions are Laptop, Build, Hire and Path. Select Laptop, for example, and you'll open up a menu of park statistics and variables to change, from the entrance fee to staff patrol areas. Build takes you to a list of available attractions, from roller coasters to toilets. Hire takes you to options of a staffing nature, and Path is your key to building walkways. This makes it very easy to navigate what could've been an awkward game.

Moving around the park is simplicity itself, using a combination of analogue sticks and shoulder buttons to zoom in/out, change angle and rotate the view. Want to change the settings on your latest thrill ride? Just move your view until the ride is highlighted in the centre of the screen and a set of new functions will appear superimposed on the function buttons.

The second helpful feature you'll notice is the presence of an on-screen advisor. He looks a bit like a dismembered ant wearing mime gloves, and speaks with an easy-on-the-ears Edinburgh burr. Unless you turn off the tutorial, this little helper will talk you through the menu system and generally pop up at frequent intervals, offering advice as you get to grips with the game. As you progress, the advisor changes hats (literally sometimes) and becomes more of a non-playable assistant, alerting you to changes or problems in your park. Is there a problem child running amok? Has your roller coaster broken down? Are there enough food shops? Don't worry, he'll tell you.

If you miss any of his pearls of wisdom, you can read the memo at your leisure from a readily accessible, on-screen email box. The result is that between prompts of a textual and disembodied, Scottish-ant nature, you'll never be left in the dark. Whether you act on his advice is another matter. The advisor is a charming way to personalise the game and the player interface. It also removes the faceless isolation that comes with so many versions of this type of simulation. It even survives the 50th stinkbomb-dropped-in-park warning without grating too much.

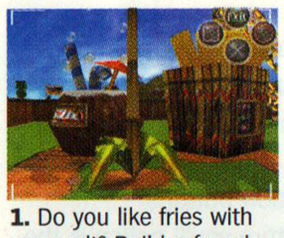
And as for the themed rubbish bins? They're as good an example as any of the game's exhaustive attention to detail. Building the rides



Frankie, here, is one of your entertainers. Keep him happy or he'll become a real horror.

FLEECE IS THE WORD

They're not visitors, they're walking wallets. It may not be nice, but here are a couple of underhand ways to stuff your coffers at the public's expense.



1. Do you like fries with your salt? Build a french fries booth next to a drinks booth. Increase the salt level on your fries to heart-stopping quantities, then crank up the price of drinks to whatever your conscience will allow. Anybody buying chips will be struck with a mysterious thirst that just has to be quenched. At any price.



2. Oh, that path. Before you open your newly built park, crank up the entry fee and remove a small section of path between the entrance and the attractions. For a small but profitable period visitors will pay to get in, reach the end of the path and leave without dropping litter and wearing out your pristine rides. And you keep the cash…

and shops is only the beginning. Change the ride duration or capacity? Sure. Tweak the prize to winning chance ratio at the Pumpkin Shy in your favour? Of course. Put more ice in the drinks or fattier meat in the burgers? Totally up to your conscience – that and what the public will stomach. Thanks to the ingenious device of having little think bubbles above punters' heads, depicting their overriding emotions or desires, you get an instant and ongoing sense of what that is. Smiley faces are good, blue faces bad, and a man and woman graphic shows they're busting to visit the little punter's room.

FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE

You can build the ultimate roller coaster and get a detailed analysis of the G-force that riders will feel on its dips and loops to help you fine-tune the experience. Raising a single pylon or tilting the track at one small section can make all the difference between a gut-churner and a bum number. Best of all is the option to sample your theme park first-hand. Press the R2 button and you'll enter into a gloriously detailed first-person view of your park seen through a camcorder. Now you can go on all the rides, including your hand-crafted roller coaster and see for yourself what works and what bites. But more than that, you can try out the park's sideshows, such as Bash The Gopher, as mini-games. It's a hugely enjoyable feature that also helps you decide how to tweak your park for maximum profit.

//Squeals from coaster riders rise and fall as they negotiate bends//



Is there anything sweeter than building and trying out your own roller coaster?



Park themes give each new creation a distinctive flavour and unique rides.

Cartoon-style visuals like those in *TPW* will never stretch the power of the PS2, so where the graphics need to perform, and do, is in the depth of animations and the flourishes that keep the eye busy. Rides go through their paces with great detail, while visitors queue, change their minds, go off to buy drinks and come back. Security cameras twitch around as kids emerge from costume shops in themed outfits, or from balloon shops with their purchases trailing above them. Everywhere you look, something is happening. Take a good look at the clouds in the sky above Halloween World and you may just make out the leering face of a Jack O' Lantern. Go into Camcorder mode and the consistency of the graphical detail between third- and first-person



A camcorder on a roller coaster? Aren't there rules about these things?

WINDOW ON THE WORLD

First-person Camcorder mode is top fun. Here are a handful of the attractions you can try out for yourself.



Roller Coaster
From the stomach-in-mouth loops to the meanest banking turns, this is the best way to get nauseous in style.



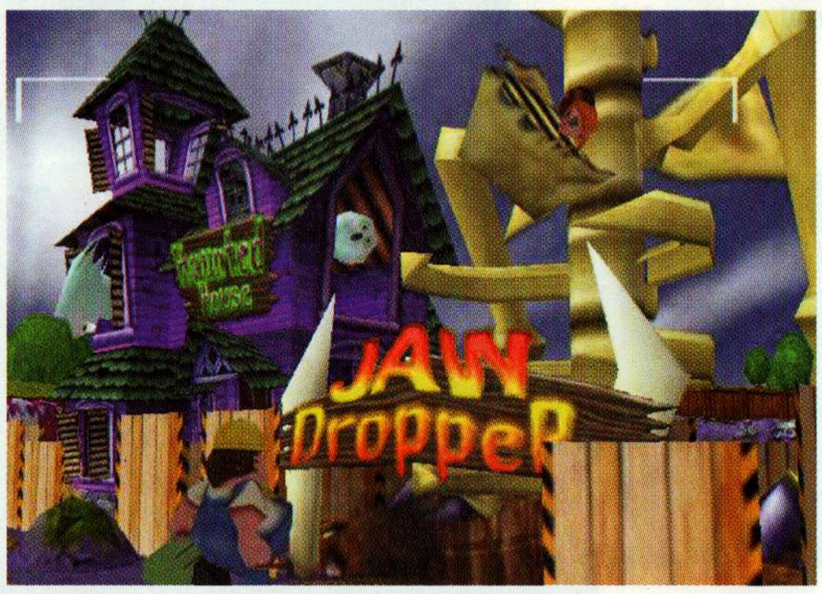
Ghost Train
A nigh on perfect representation of the real thing. So, not scary in the slightest.



Sideshows
Pressure of business getting to you? Why not smack some rodents on the bonces for fun?



Air Tour
Take a blimp ride and leave your lunch behind.



Punters love to be spoilt for choice. Fill your park with features and you'll be rich!





BOAST-A-BELTER-COASTER

What's more fun than riding a roller coaster? Nothing, but building your own spine-compacting, innard spinner comes a close second. And it's dead easy.



1. Choose a large, open space and place the entrance within easy reach of your visitors.

2. Then build the track. It's safe to lay sections anywhere the ground is shaded grey.

3. Alter the heights of the track-supporting pylons and the tilt of the bends to maximise the thrill factor.

4. Put your stomach where your mouth is – flick into first-person mode and try it out yourself.

views is impressive. Every dropped wrapper, every visitor and ornamental fountain is rendered in real-time. Even as you're being thrown around on the Demon Disc, you'll see the park in full swing below your dizzying vantage point.

The sound too is impressively structured, with the requisite screams of delight floating up from the scarier rides and a general hubbub of people having fun (or not, as the case may be) underlying the lot. Happen to pass over a toilet seconds after someone shuts the door and you may hear an unsuppressed fart. Rides get louder as you approach and the squeals of fear from coaster riders rise and recede as they negotiate its bends. If you're doing your job right, you'll be able to hear the sweet music of cash registers as they play to your profit margin. There's nothing overly showy, but the cumulative effect does wonders for the in-game atmosphere.

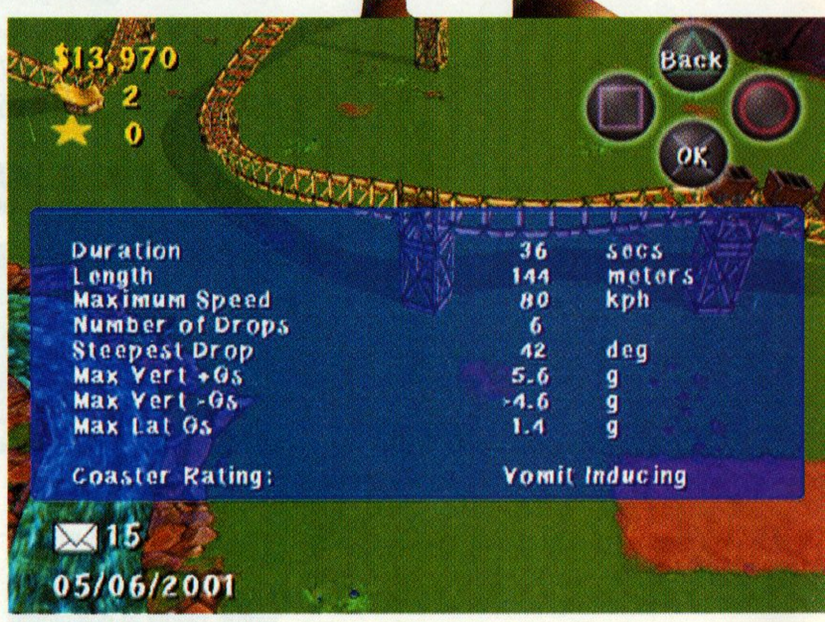
But for all that, *TPW* is not perfect. It does rely on the not-particularly-exciting promise of new rides and parks a little too much as its way of keeping you interested. Then again, it is the kind of title that benefits from dipping into over a long period. Another potential concern is how hard it can be to fail once you've got to grips with the fundamentals of a particular themed environment. Set up a modestly competent park, leave it for half an hour and chances are you'll still be making a profit when you return. This kind of hands-off playing won't win you gold tickets but it does tend to undermine your role as a captain of the leisure industry. Graphically and feature-wise the game isn't a huge leap up from the PSone version. That's not to say it isn't an all-round improvement and there are additional rides and attractions for you to work towards, but if you have the earlier version, this is not an overwhelming argument for shelling out again.

Despite these quibbles, and especially if you've yet to play a tycoon on the small screen, *TPW* is a charming, fun and thoroughly rewarding game to play and well worth the entry price. Just don't eat the burgers. ☐ **Paul Fitzpatrick**



How do you make a Pumpkin Shy? Spend $2,000 on it. Ba ba ching!





Vomit-inducing: a roller coaster rating worth striving for.

THEME PARK WORLD

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	A very enjoyable and charming game which has a lightness of touch that will appeal to those usually put off by plodding business sims.
- Easy to pick up - Ace fun to play - Sublime attention to detail	- Repetition could grate eventually, but not for a good while - Not far enough removed from last year's PSone version	

Graphics	It's the flourishes that raise the ante here	07
Sound	Well balanced and totally immersive	08
Gameplay	Features + Ease Of Use + Total Control = Fun	08
Life span	Without add-ons even theme parks get dull	06

PlayStation 2 VERDICT **07**





The four-player option is very playable, even with the slight drop in graphical detail, though as with the two-player mode, don't expect any other cars to join you.



F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000

Confused by the countless F1 games available on PSone? The PS2 deluge starts here...

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA/ Visual Sciences
Price: £44.99
Players: 1-4 (22 in Time Trial)
Out: Now
Web site: playstation2.ea.com/gamepage_f1.html

Back story
This is EA's first 128 bit attempt at Formula One, having entered the F1 gaming race in March this year after acquiring the 2000 season licence. Since then it's already managed to produce two such titles on PSone and PC.

Well, here they come. The oil in PlayStation 2 has barely had time to warm up after powering its way out of 165,000 boxes, and already the digital F1 starting grid is filling up with contenders for Sony's 128 bit chequered flag. Quickest to react to the lights is this effort from publishing giant EA, beating competitors from Video System and SCEE.

The situation wouldn't be so absurd were the different games offering substantially individual experiences from each other, yet regrettably this is rarely the case. Publishers keep churning out the same 22-car, 16- (occasionally 17-) race scenario, presumably assuming no one will notice. How do you tell F1 games apart? In reality, most people don't bother anymore.

But before focusing on what may separate this from the next F1 game, let's take your DVD drive for a spin and focus on what the game should contain. The pleasantly minimalist options screen offers the usual one race, custom (where you pick which and how many tracks make up the season) and full championship settings. There's a multiplayer selection for one- to four-player, split-screen antics as well as a turn-based Time Trial for up to 22 players, should you ever decide to host an F1 gaming party.

At the top of the list, the customary quick race remains the swiftest way to get strapped into the virtual cockpit. Thankfully, there's some actual innovation here. Rather than provide you with the usual all-access pass to any of the race tracks, EA's game has the boldness to make you work for circuit entries (even if the effect is somewhat diluted by the ability to race any of the circuits in the Single Grand Prix mode). For instance, just three events are initially accessible, namely Silverstone, Monza and Hockenheim. Opening the remaining 14 requires championship points acquired from racing. So, for instance, if you want to race at Imola, you'll need a measly two points. Austria's A1 Ring, next on the list, requires another three, and so on, until you reach the 100 score permitting you access to the highly technical Suzuka track. Granted, it's not akin to reinventing the wheel, but if you've played several F1 titles recently you'll know that structure isn't something normally found within videogaming representations of this great sport.

TINKER, TAILOR

Also commonplace in F1 games is the ability to tweak particular aspects of racing. While the Quick Race mode may only enable limited control over these, championship races allow for more tinkering. Whether you opt for the full season, make up your own or a single GP race, you're given the option to indulge in most of the proceedings that usually take place over the weekend – namely practice, qualifying, the Sunday-morning warm-up and the race itself, obviously. With the exception of the last one, you can tweak your car's handling characteristics in the hope of determining the setup that should reward you with victory. The other main difference from the Quick Race option is the ability to switch on tyre wear and fuel consumption, while also setting the degree of complexity of pit work. At the most mainstream level, basic downforce, gearbox and suspension options are offered, but don your

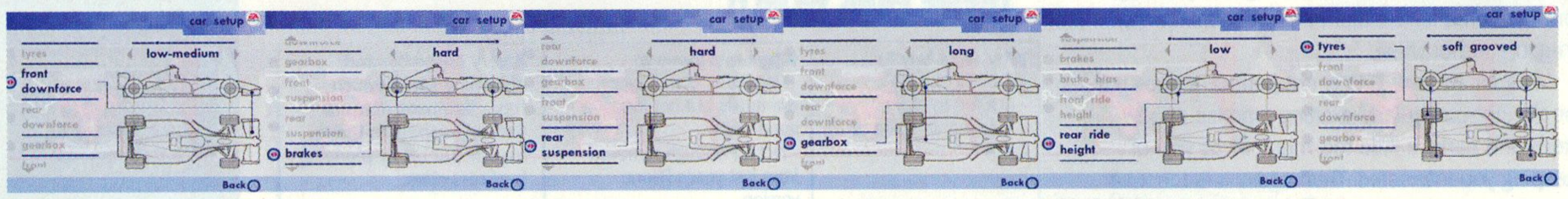


There's an overall attention to detail that's particularly satisfying.

//The driving dynamics are exceedingly newcomer-friendly//

MECHANICAL MAYHEM

Car too stiff, front end not committing? Time to head back to the pits.



Downforce
The more wing your car carries, the more it will stick to the road but the slower it becomes. In other words, plenty of downforce in Monaco, not so much around Silverstone.

Brakes
The circuit speed dictates the strength of the brakes. Usually this also affects brake wear but as this is not supported in the game it's more down to personal driving style.

Suspension
Just a few millimetres in an F1 car but these can make a huge difference. A stiffer car generally holds the road better but is less forgiving of circuit gradient changes.

Gear ratio
A shorter geared car will accelerate more quickly but boast a slower top speed – ideal for slower circuits offering short straights punctuated by slow corners, such as Monaco.

Ride height
The closer your car is to the ground, the faster it will go. Conversely, the more prone it becomes to track imperfections slowing it down. Watch out for bumpy circuits such as Brazil.

Tyres
The softer the tyre, the more it will grip the road but the quicker it will deteriorate, hence their significance in qualifying rounds. Your driving style should determine what ones to use.

LET'S SEE THAT AGAIN

Too busy looking ahead to know who knocked you into the gravel trap? Now you can find out.





One interesting feature EA has implemented in many of its games is the ability to replay the previous few seconds at the press of a button and *F1 Championship Season 2000* is no different. If anything happens on track that you think may make interesting viewing, press the △ button and you're treated to a multi-angled replay of the particular event. The sequences have been designed by Keith McKenzie, 1999's FIA award-winning TV Race Director, and it shows. McKenzie may have been able to place the cameras anywhere within the game without having to worry about real-world physical constraints but the result remains wonderfully televisual, with some excellent virtual camera work. As ever, presentation is not something you can criticise EA games of lacking. This latest venture is no different.

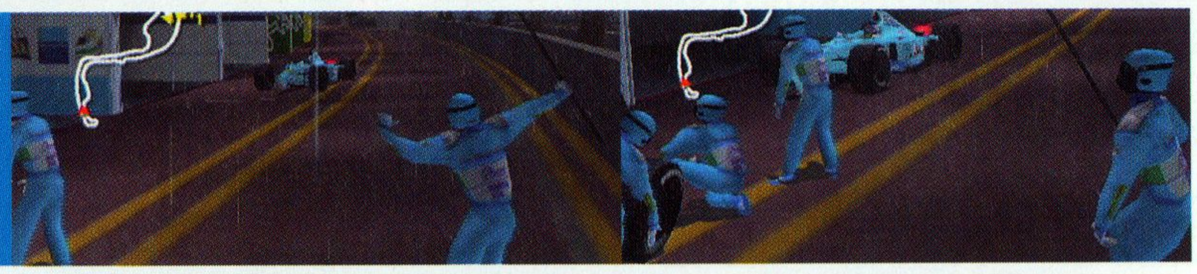


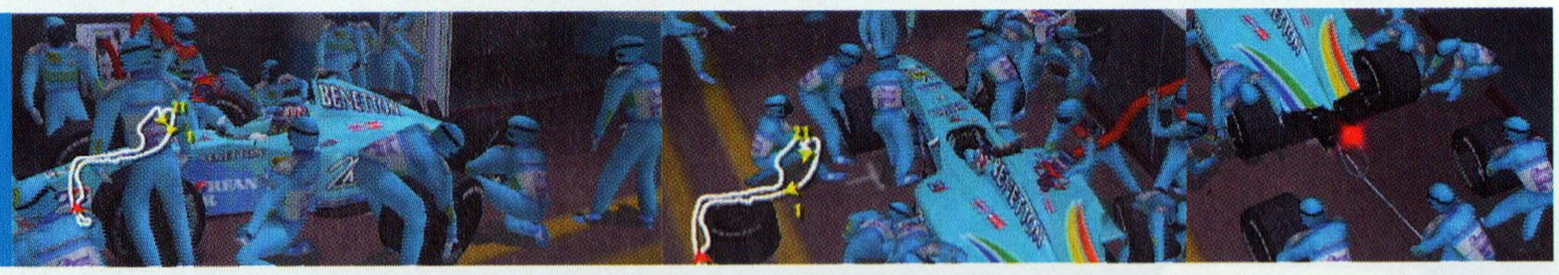




IT'S THE PITS

The most exciting aspect of modern F1 racing, finally recreated with the attention it deserves, largely as a result of the magic that is motion capture. Hopefully, everyone will now follow EA's lead.





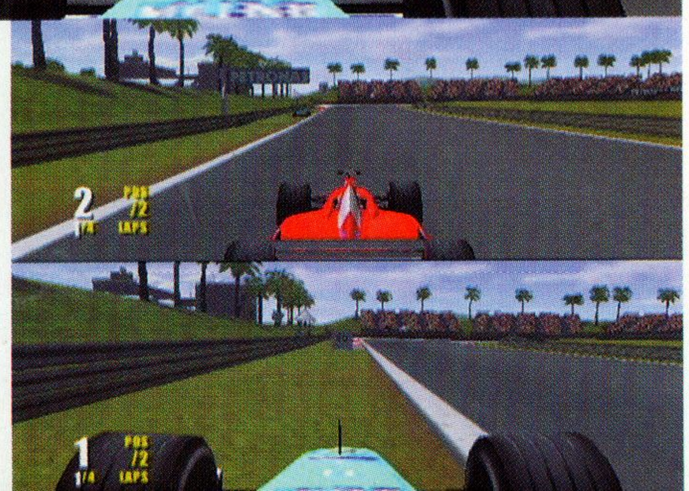


Car comes in, wheels come off, fuel hose goes on, and in this case a new nose cone too (sadly, the rear wing just magically appears). The process is poetry in motion and usually takes just eight seconds or so (without wing changes).



The collision model is fully 3D, which means flipping the car is a possibility.





Two-player races lose the 20 other cars that should be on the track but they can still prove addictive.

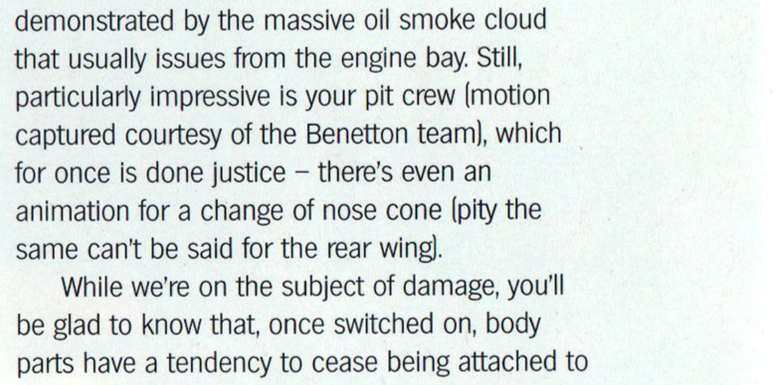
polygonal overalls and eventually ride height, tyre selection, brake intensity and bias get thrown into the mix along with a slightly more comprehensive set of options for the original settings. Admittedly it's still nothing to trouble the intricacy of the setup screens found on the average PC F1 sim, but then this isn't aiming at that market.

And given its handling characteristics, *F1 Championship Season 2000* isn't attempting to entice the hardened digital racing fan, either. This, coming from an EA production, shouldn't shock anyone – make the action too demanding and you'll probably alienate that lucrative mass market, after all. Why let a good game get in the way of economics? Anyway, the driving dynamics, even with the assists turned off, are exceedingly newcomer-friendly – you can leave the braking astonishingly late, throw the cars into bends with obscene severity and only when you step off the black stuff or violently bounce your way across a curb does the back end ever try to make its way to the front. True, in the wet things get a little trickier but only because the analogue sensitivity range of the accelerator (either on the ⊗ button or the right analogue stick) is inadequately short, making it annoyingly difficult to balance the throttle around corners.

INTRICATE ON-TRACK DETAIL

But at least graphically things are impressive. You'd expect the correct car livery and every grandstand to have been faithfully recreated, of course, but pleasing attention to detail is noticeable throughout. For instance, the pit lane speed-limiter light which was introduced to Grand Prix this year flashes on and off while your car makes its way along the pit straight at 50mph. Tyre smoke is probably the most convincingly implemented to date, managing an almost real quality with the way it appears to get sucked

There's no in-race commentary, but ITV's Jim Rosenthal does pre- and post-race analysis.



//Most impressive is your pit crew, which for once is done justice//

around the rapidly rotating wheels before billowing out of the back. Conversely, engine blow-outs aren't as effective, lacking the dynamism normally demonstrated by the massive oil smoke cloud that usually issues from the engine bay. Still, particularly impressive is your pit crew (motion captured courtesy of the Benetton team), which for once is done justice – there's even an animation for a change of nose cone (pity the same can't be said for the rear wing).

While we're on the subject of damage, you'll be glad to know that, once switched on, body parts have a tendency to cease being attached to the cars should the odd collision occur. And while serious automotive arguments can motivate the car to flip over (causing an excellent camera cut-out effect in cockpit view), loose wheels, damaged suspension and, pleasingly, stripped paintwork are the result.

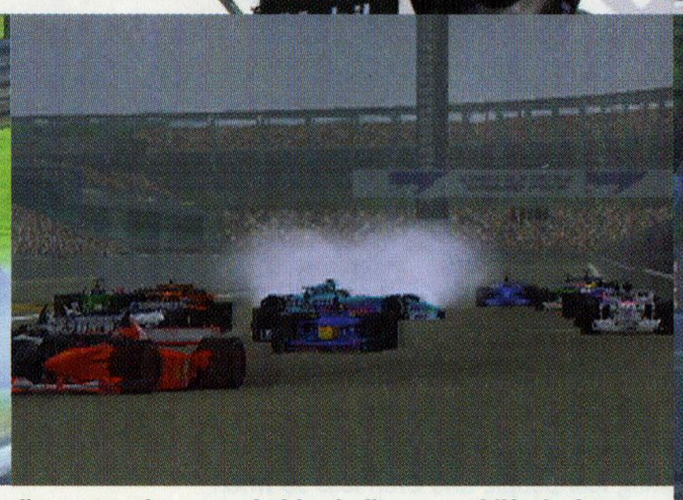
Besides, the AI is such that most of the time the CPU opposition will do its best to avoid contact, even giving up a corner if it means a



Tyre smoke is beautifully implemented throughout.



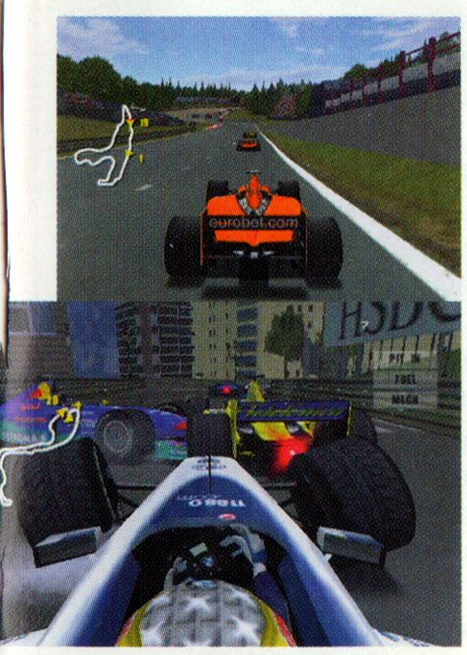






Crashes and spins are particularly well conveyed – remarkably similar to real life, in fact.

While tyre smoke is great, rain spray is not as convincing.



With damage fully on, breaking suspension arms is rather easy.

potential crash. That's not to say that the other drivers are a pushover – even on easy, should a competitor see a chance coming back out of the corner he's just relinquished, he'll certainly have a stab at regaining track position. Nor does it mean they're infallible – they certainly have their fair share of trips into gravel traps. But they won't necessarily fully convey the sense of racing against real personalities either. Occasionally you can find them perfectly lined up behind one another, seemingly happy to travel the track as one giant F1 snake rather than have a stab at improving individual track position. Which, needless to say, isn't particularly inspiring.

RACING PREDICAMENTS

What else doesn't the game do satisfactorily? Well, there's the occasional frame rate problem, usually as you make your way out of a corner given that the CPU has to recreate an entire new set of trackside elements. But it's only momentary and even then not significant enough to spoil the rhythm. More frustrating is the fact the weather doesn't appear to be dynamic – it may sound petty, but the gameplay implications are substantial. Mid-race rain can alter the events dramatically, far more so than any accident or retirement ever could and yet, irritatingly, it's a feature too many developers appear happy to ignore. Odd, too, is your car's braking ability – while the brakes bite with the veracity of a rabid bulldog when triple figures are involved, they take a ludicrous amount of time to stop you at a measly 30mph.

But ultimately *F1 Championship Season 2000*'s biggest predicament is that it offers nothing of any significance over past F1 titles. It's very good and very playable, yes, but hardly revolutionary. If only publishers and developers would realise that, even within the presumably tight constraints issued by the FOM (the sport's governing body) there *is* room for approaching F1 games from new angles and attempting to produce something memorable using the costly F1 licence at their disposal. Such a move would be preferable to further saturating the market with yet another lifeless if authentic recreation of this sport, and would only benefit them in the long run. If you've won your fair share of virtual F1 world championships, prettier graphics alone aren't necessarily going to make the experience any more alluring. But 'if', as Murray Walker often says, is 'F1' spelt backwards. □ **Joao Sanches**





Johnny Herbert's dreadful luck, even in the digital F1 realm, continues.

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Its easy nature will undoubtedly please the crowds but, ironically, not necessarily the hardcore racing fan that would feel inclined to acquire yet another F1 title.
- Attention to detail - Sense of speed - Damage implementation - Anamorphic option for widescreen TVs	- No real innovation - A manufactured and impersonal feel - Frame rate problems - No marshals	

Graphics	Very clean and very detailed	07
Sound	Sampled but same for all cars	05
Gameplay	Typically EA-friendly, though competent	06
Life span	At least until the next one turns up	06

06

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

TRICKY TURNS

Five corners from the F1 world that could drive you round the bend.

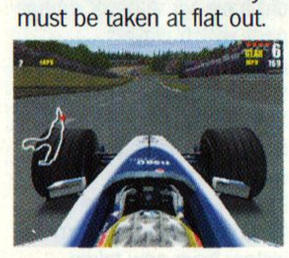
Grand Hotel – Monaco
This hairpin is the slowest (30mph) bend on the already leisurely Monaco track. Usually the scene of first-lap incidents, this is hard to get right due to the limited turning circle of an F1 car, particularly if you're also defending track position from a competitor.



130R – Suzuka
Placed at the top and middle of a fast, long straight, it's impossible to see the apex, meaning you have to throw the car into the corner before it's hardly begun. Get it wrong and you'll be kissing the barriers at suspension-snapping velocity.



Eau Rouge – Belgium
This long 'S' awaits those who negotiate the hairpin following the start/finish straight, plunging them closer to the earth's core before allowing them to come out the other side, having survived the bend at the bottom. Absolutely must be taken at flat out.



Esse 14 – Canada
Beware the last chicane. It leads into a start/finish straight just long enough for a pursuing car to slipstream past should you come out of it too slowly, so you'll need as much speed as you can handle. But with no run-off area, there's no room for error.



Copse – Silverstone
Silverstone's first corner is a sweeping right-hander leading into a straight significant enough to allow competitors past should you lack speed. Taken flat out, it requires severe commitment, as well as a perfect racing line.





STREET FIGHTER EX3

Can this fallen master emerge victorious on the PS2 or is it time to let the legend die with dignity?

Publisher: Capcom Eurosoft
Developer: Arika
Price: £44.99
Players: 1-4
Out: Now
Web site: www.capcom.com

Back story

Street Fighter was originally born into the arcades back in 1987. It wasn't particularly impressive as a game, but it did have some novel rubber pads which players punched to inflict the on-screen blows. It wasn't until *Street Fighter II* was released in 1991 that the world fell at its feet. Years of being regarded as the best fighting game in modern history have now taken their toll on *Street Fighter* and this noble gladiator has succumbed to the overpowering might of *Tekken* in recent years.

The accompanying press release with this game proudly states that '*Street Fighter EX3* was the number one beat-'em-up at launch for the Japanese PlayStation 2'. True, it was. It was also the *only* beat-'em-up at launch and it would have only taken one measly purchase to catapult it to the number one spot. Back then though, there was no *Tekken Tag Tournament* and with the tables now turned for the European launch with *TTT* being available from the start, everyone has had to wait for *Street Fighter EX3* to arrive, but let's be brutally honest – was anyone really waiting?

Rather sadly, *Street Fighter* has toppled off its mantle since PSone was born. Its over-used engine that made Capcom millions during the SNES days has been superseded by the style and sophistication of *Tekken*. *Street Fighter* had better pull something out of its reserves because the gulf is getting wider and with the PlayStation 2 still only a newborn, it has got to mark its authority NOW. From those important few first impressions though, it was never likely that *Street Fighter EX3* would be the candidate to come out on top. Above gameplay on the priorities list when rating PS2's first games was looks, and *SFEX3* ain't no looker.

In stark contrast to the rendered beauty of *TTT*, this game is overflowing with artificial-looking, clunky characters the likes of which haven't been seen since *Big Brother* finished its ten-week stint. Keeping with the theory that games and real life are two separate entities, *SFEX3* looks alright. You're certainly not going to mistake any of these freaks as being real people and even less so when you see them move. Whether through genuine intrigue or pity, we shoved *TTT* to one side long enough to give this a decent crack. Apart from the somewhat ugly 3D characters (set against 2D backgrounds) all the old magic is still there and for *SF* veterans such as we, the game still produces a bloody good scrap.

FIGHTING IN PYJAMAS

Classic characters such as Sagat, the red and white pyjama boys and Bison are here. As are the old drifters from *Street Fighter II* that just seem to pop in and out of the long running series whenever they feel like it (Blanka, Guile, Zangief and so on). Anyone who played the '*EX*' *SF* games on PSone will be familiar with the bunch of characters that occupy the other half of this impressive 25 character set-up. Chuck in a couple of new secret ones and the stage is set for *SFEX3* to crack its knuckles and remind the masses why we are familiar with the name in the first place. Or at least try to.

The biggest new feature this game flags is the tagging. Players can pair off two of their favourite characters to combine forces and smash the living souls out of the opposition. Each set of characters has their own specific tag combos which can be used to great effect during play. Playing this game in its main Arena mode, you start out as a lone warrior, but as you work your way through the fights, more enemies gang up on you. But as soon as the second fight you could be up against three opposing fighters. Okay, they may not be too rich in the health meter department, but three enemies certainly test your reflexes and is a superb progression for the series. As your opponents get suitably decked, you can enlist one of the fallen few into your fighting outfit, using them later on as tag partners or just another stepping stone in your quest for completion (and some rather poor end sequences).

As you could expect in a *Street Fighter* game, the action is fast and furious and features some truly lavish special effects that ignite the screen as the blows connect. Fans of the series will certainly be in awe, whilst anyone who's passing and has never played a *SF* game and catches a glimpse will certainly be intrigued. Having sampled the Japanese version of the game when it was released, we can happily report that some of the reasons why it was such an anti-climax have been rectified. The slow-down which is so often an occupational hazard in this line of game has been nicely toned down so that you barely notice any alteration in the speed as you play. The quest for a richer, full-screened fighting experience continues though. In this PAL conversion, the borders are so thick that you almost think that you're playing it through half-closed eyes. If you've never played the Japanese version then you may not notice, but for the rest of us that are only too aware of the screen-restricting perils that the PAL factor inflicts upon us, it is annoying how a new machine can't sort this problem out once and for all.

//The action is fast and furious and features some lavish effects//

Browsing through the options of *Street Fighter EX3*, several new modes are apparent. Original mode is a somewhat short one-player game whereby you have to survive a series of fights



Fighting against three opponents at once is the ultimate test of your fighting prowess.

DEVIL WORSHIPPING
Just what is it with devils and fighting games?



First Kazuya listened to too much heavy metal music and succumbed to Satan's charms, now Ryu sports the alarmingly bushy eyebrows of the possessed to make him seem more interesting. To unlock Satan's little helper, you must beat Original mode eight times with Ryu (no continuing, mind) and then hold SELECT when you choose him. Then watch his eyes glow.

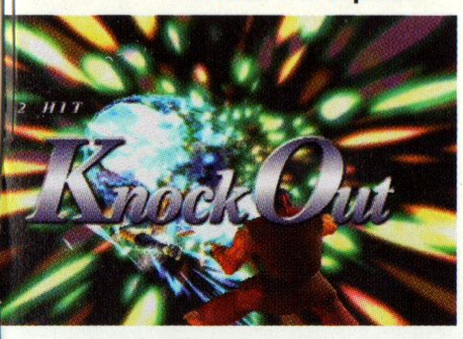
Ryu is still very much the face of *Street Fighter*. His evil alter-ego is back, also.

against random characters with the odds greatly stacked against you. Sometimes you fight one player, other times you fight three at once. The ultimate aim is to defeat Bison, and when you do a secret character will be unlocked to save and use. Arena mode is tailor-made to show off some of the game's best new features. You can opt to fight as a dual-force tag team, or with up to four of you. You can also play in a two-on-two fight whereby up to four humans can slug it out for overall supremacy.

CREATE A FIGHTER

Aside from these multiplayer shenanigans, our favourite mode was the new Character Edit. In this you get to play as a new character called Ace who starts out with a distinctly slim moves list. By performing a series of tasks that get progressively harder (from a simple throw on your opponent right through to being asked to inflict 90 or more hits) you gain experience points which can then be used to buy new moves. Edit these into Ace's moves list and you can use them to help get you

Knock your opponent out with Super Combos and the screen will explode.





Gazing into her crystal ball, Chun-Li predicts that the future is distinctly short for poor Sakura.



BEAT-'EM-ALL

If you like getting stuck in to a good ruckas, then *Street Fighter EX3* encourages your violent tendencies with a whole host of modes designed to get as many characters fighting on-screen as possible.



Tag Battle
A straightforward Versus mode whereby each player chooses two characters to act as a tag team and demolish the opposition.



Dramatic Battle
Like previous DBs, this is a lop-sided match whereby two players gang-up against the computer, or a single warrior goes it alone against three CPU opponents.



Team Battle
Again, this is a two-player Versus mode, but each player can choose up to four characters each for a right royal rumble.



Multiplay
This is the high point of the game, four characters on screen, each controlled by a different player and the last one standing wins.





He may have the brawn and the experience of over 20 *SF* games, but Ryu still gets whipped by girls.

Proof enough that really are no gentlemen in the *SF* universe, only Jack the lads.





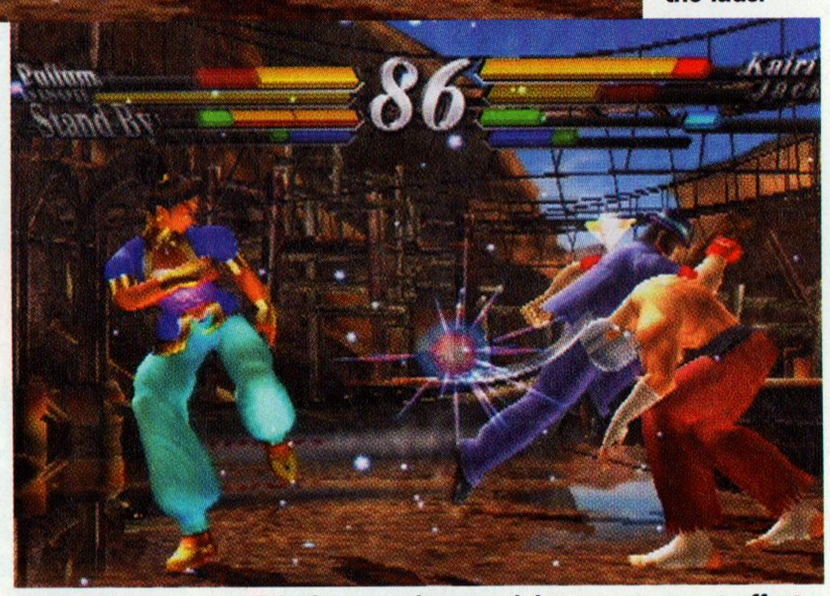
The special effects in *SFEX3* are one of its highlights. Sadly, these are marred by chunky-looking characters.

YOU! OUTSIDE!

When you finish Original mode in *SFEX3*, you will be invited to deck as many opponents as possible during the ending credits.



As the credits start to roll, up to eight hoodlums crawl out of the shadows to inflict a severe beating upon you.



Two characters can join forces using special moves to great effect.



You'll need to use moves that wipe out as many of them as possible in one go. Hurricane kicks are a good example.



The exact purpose of this exercise is unknown, but it is ideal for using up any pent-up aggression still in your system.

points for some of the trickier tasks. Your customised Ace character can then be saved to the Memory Card and used in any of the other modes – thus giving you your own character that has been made by you to fulfil your needs and your needs alone. This is also the ideal mode for getting to grips with some of the more elaborate combos, juggles and counter strikes which are ready and waiting to be tamed in the game.

YOU MOVE ME

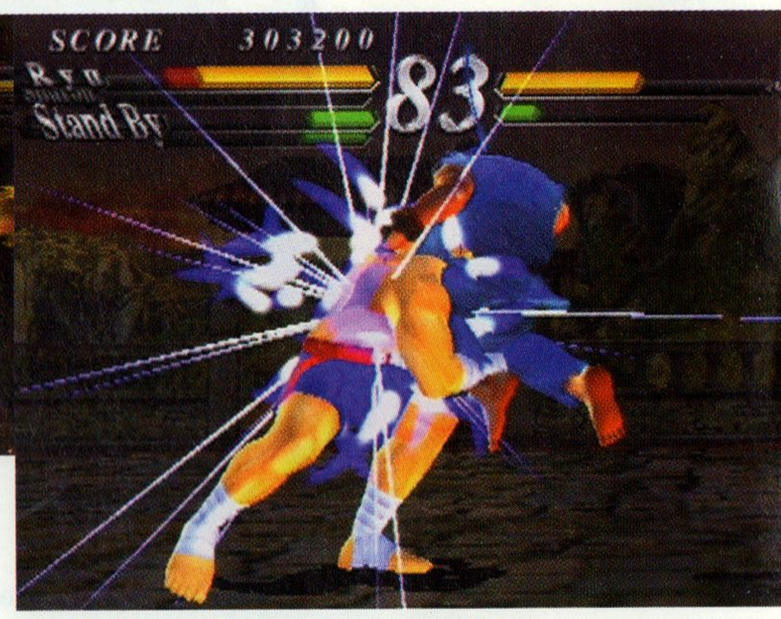
As for moves, where *Tekken Tag* has a list so large that you can look good playing it by randomly bashing all the buttons, *Street Fighter* has always had a somewhat easier-to-learn palette. There are essentially a few different move commands that are the same from character to character. Meaning that you can pick up the entire repertoire in a very short space of time and always know exactly what you're doing when in combat. It also means that when you've played one *Street Fighter* game, you've played them all.

True, it does cram much more action onto the screen than *Tekken*, but the simplistic game engine that has been used to near-death down the years is still here chugging away on the PlayStation 2. Furthermore it now looks even more out of its depth than it did when trying to compete with *Tekken* games on the PSone.

The new features in this game will certainly appeal to the die-hard fan base, but there's not much here to dissuade people from buying

//It was never likely that *SFEX3* would come out on top//





Nearby homes suffer a loss of electricity as Sagat draws power for the killer blow.

Tekken Tag. Although it pains us to say it, the evidence suggests that *Street Fighter*'s best years are behind it. Having pioneered so much in the beat-'em-up genre in the past, there's not enough new ground being covered here to make us feel optimistic about its future. Sure, the developer must be credited for attempting to steer this vessel towards pastures new, but the fact still remains that this game is inferior to *Tekken Tag* in every possible department. ☐ **Ryan Butt**

STREET FIGHTER EX3

Why we'd buy it:	**Why we'd leave it:**	**A decent fighting game but doesn't give *TTT* enough to worry about. Great for fans, not a big enough progression for the neutrals.**
- The new tag combos are livelier than *Tekken*'s - *SF* was entertaining the masses when *Tekken* was just a glint in Namco's eye	- The graphics leave a lot to be desired - When you've played one *SF* game, you've played them all - Them horrible borders	

Graphics	Chunky characters and drab backgrounds	06
Sound	Thumping sound effects but forgettable tunes	06
Gameplay	Plays as good/as bad as it ever did	07
Life span	Extras to unlock and generally challenging	07

06

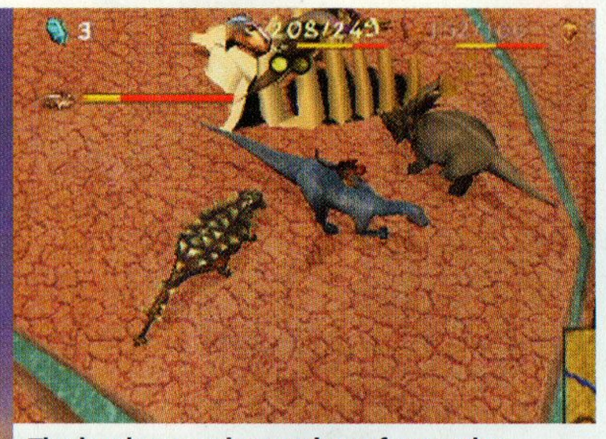
PlayStation 2 VERDICT



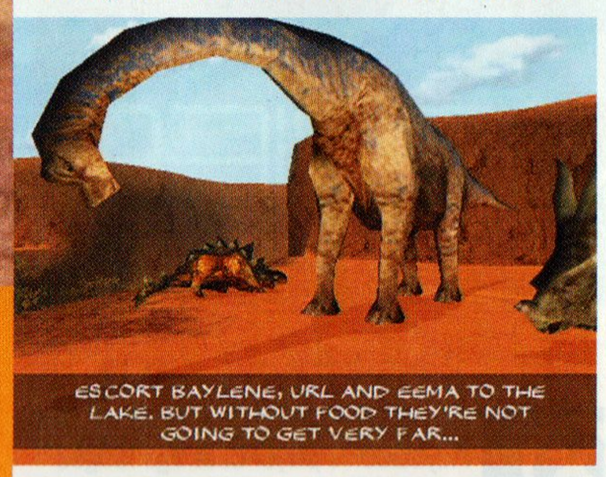
A skyscraper-sized meteorite crashes to Earth and separates the three friends – and a heap of smaller rocks threaten Aladar.

Zini the monkey's peculiar speciality is chucking fruit to dislodge giant rocks (?), while Flia can help remove obstructions.





The levels come in a variety of attractive colours – grey, brown, yellow and, er, that's it. *Walking With Dinosaurs* never looked so drab.



The trio of aged dinos you stumble upon won't move unless they're fed and watered. Annoying.

DISNEY'S DINOSAUR

If only Disney-made games were extinct too.

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Ubi Soft
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: Now
Web site: www.ubisoft.co.uk

Back story
Ever since *Aladdin* on the SNES back in 1993, Disney has given blood-spitting gamers the same 2D platform game over and over again, with only the looks changed to reflect each successive movie. Finally, Disney has tried something a little different with *Dinosaur*.

Disney creates movie; movie spawns merchandise; merchandise includes pitifully poor videogame that undeservedly finds it way into people's homes – and oils Walt's cynical money-making machine – on the basis of its name alone. It's a time-worn pattern that sadly continues with *Dinosaur*, Ubi Soft's PS2 answer to the recent cloying, CGI-drenched blockbuster.

All credit to *Dinosaur*, though – at least it isn't that Disney speciality, a tiresome 2D platformer. Instead, it's a curious mix of adventure and puzzle game in which you control three of the movie's characters – Aladar the dinosaur, Zini the monkey and Flia the bird – and use their special skills to make progress through their meteorite-torn homeland. A homeland which, inexplicably, is viewed from some kind of prehistoric helicam that gives all the fancy 3D dinosaurs the look of faraway bits of ragged cardboard, and makes the worst of the featureless expanses of sand and rock.

The multiple character idea is promising, but unfortunately ruined in the hands of Ubi Soft. You can only exploit the animals' unique gifts when the game wants you to – so, for example, Zini won't use his gangling limbs to chuck oranges unless there's something nearby to chuck them at. With no room for experimentation, you feel hemmed in, forced rather than guided toward the end of each level – something that's reinforced when the game smacks you in the face with unsubtle hints, such as bright yellow circles around important objects and messages like, "Taunt the dinosaur now to lure him onto that collapsible bridge!".

Ironically, it's when you try to follow *Dinosaur*'s tell-tale advice that the game throws up barriers to stop you. Unresponsive controls, a hopeless camera and invisible barriers all conspire to make picking up items, bloodying enemies and even moving around a nightmare. This is a game that believes that manoeuvrability shouldn't be allowed to get in the way of a nice bit of animation – time and again, you'll die because Zini has to reach back, aim, and *very slowly* chuck a bit of fruit while raptors make for his throat.

The usual defence against this kind of rubbish is that it's meant 'for the kids'. But *Dinosaur*'s 'digital encyclopedia', which separates motiveless beasts into 'friends' and 'enemies' and comes stuffed with spelling mistakes and useless scientific jargon ("Its name means reptil [sic] with parallel septum comb") should be all the evidence parents need to keep *Dinosaur* far, far away from impressionable young minds. ☐ **Mark Green**

DISNEY'S DINOSAUR

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Like the movie, *Dinosaur* is a vacuous trip through prehistoric times that completely fails to entertain. Don't inflict this on any child.
- Interesting multi-character idea - Pretty clips from the movie	- Fiddly controls - Insultingly linear puzzles - Sparse, ugly maps - Shockingly poor 'encyclopedia'	

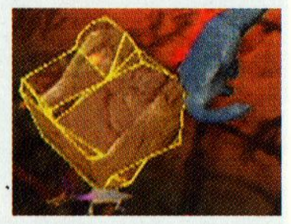
Graphics	Barren, eye-burningly coloured landscapes	03
Sound	The odd snatch of movie-like music	05
Gameplay	Frustrating, boring and quickly tiresome	04
Life span	By the fifth level, you'll be numb	03

04

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

ANIMAL MAGIC

Each of the main characters has special abilities – not least, in Zini the monkey's case, existing 200 centuries too soon.



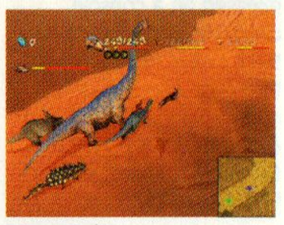
Aladar
Lumbering dinosaurs are dead useful when rocks and trees need to be shoved aside, and with a barge of his bonce Aladar can see off the most stubborn of raptors. He can also leap the odd gap if need be. Scientific accuracy? Forget about it.



Zini
It takes a giant leap of logic to work out that a monkey can climb sheer cliff faces, but scrambling up vine-covered walls is so tricky we had to resort to the digital pad to manage it. Zini can also monkey about – literally – to cheer up blubbing dino babies.

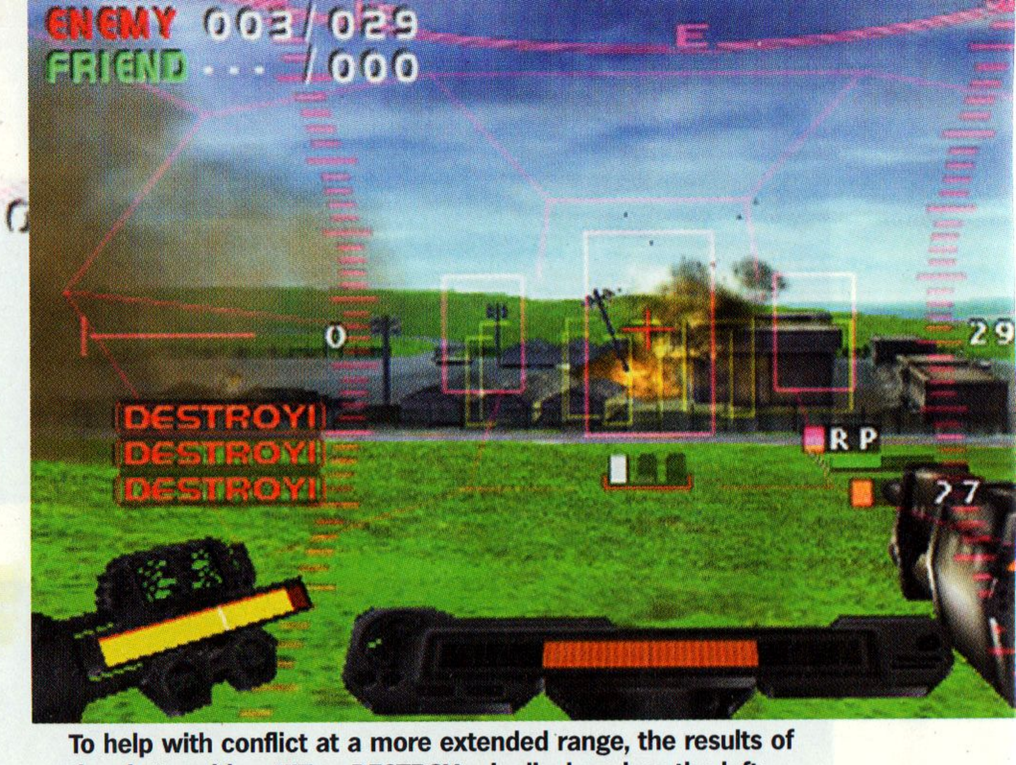


Flia
She flies and – after a few minutes spent bashing the joypad and swearing loudly – swoops and dives to collect objects and food from the ground. Pressing ⊗ will make her fly faster or judder unnervingly, depending on how the game's feeling.



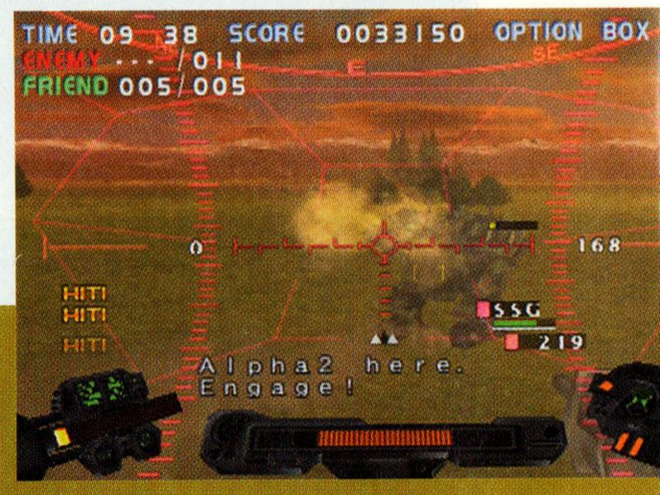
The Trio
If Aladar, Zini and Flia are close together, pressing L1+R1 brings all three under your control at once. Irritatingly, this is necessary to make progress at some points, so if you've gone exploring with one character, you'll need to bring them all the way back.





To help with conflict at a more extended range, the results of the shot – either HIT or DESTROY – is displayed on the left.

While striking from a distance is wiser, sometimes you just have to unload in someone's face.



GUN GRIFFON BLAZE

Another mech game arrives to satisfy the robot fetish in us all.

Publisher: Swing
Developer: GameArts
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: February 2001
Web site: www.gamearts.co.jp/products/ggblaze

Back story

While everyone in the world was busy buying PSones, a number of genuinely good games were being quietly released on a console called the Sega Saturn only to be lost in history. One of them was about giant robots shooting bits off each other. It was called *Gun Griffon*. This is its big PlayStation 2 brother.

One word: *Transformers*. While the first PlayStation's player-base age ranged from pre-impregnated eggs to the recently dead, the central demographic was – if we were to be so crude – those twenty-somethings who breathed Eighties culture as kids, were momentarily familiar with videogaming and found a way back in with the sleek Sony culture renaissance. So, basically, the central demographic, at one point or another, really dug *Transformers*.

So deep within your body – perhaps slightly below your left atrium – there's part of you that just loves the idea of over-powered Japanese styled robots *bashing the non-living nuts and bolts out of each other*. And now you have a piece of technology that's more than capable of presenting these hulking beasts in Technicolor graphics unimaginable in those halcyon days.

Which is where the kitsch-appeal titled *Gun Griffon Blaze* enters the fray. It places you behind the controls of a death machine bristling with weaponry phallic enough to make Freud come out in a cold sweat. Then it throws you into a warzone where your aim is to unload the military arsenal of a small country into anything that moves before firing the rest into everything that doesn't.

There are some giant-robot games that apply a semi-serious aura of mystique to their subject matter. *Gun Griffon Blaze* has *nothing* to do with these, realising first that the topic is entirely ridiculous and then revelling in its insanity. Despite the occasionally technical gubbins, this is almost certainly your best bet for a straight shooter outside of the irrepressible *TimeSplitters*.

GUNSHIP FANTASIES

Controls are kept to a minimum, with your right hand dealing with the acceleration and sideways motion of your suit, and weaponry controls located on the shoulder pad. Your left deals with what direction you're choosing to point your metal muzzle, either on the analogue control or the basic D-pad. Other inputs – such as your sniper zoom-lens or your jump-pack – slot in sweetly to a relatively minimalistic control set up.

Oh God. You really can't go past the dual phrases of wonder 'zoom-lens' and 'jump-pack' without further elaboration, can you? *Gun Griffon Blaze*'s implementation of magnification technology is particularly impressive, with blurring effects as you activate and deactivate the device. It's ideal for allowing you to scope out the true



Embarassed robots regularly attempt to avoid appearing in family snap albums.



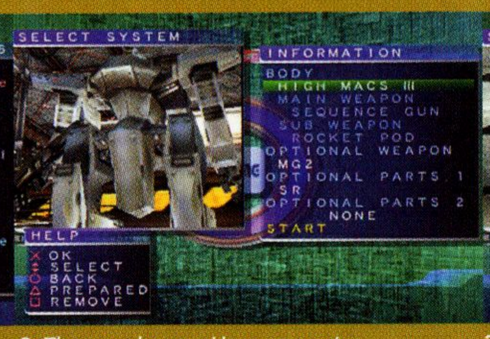
Plan your assaults before entering the fray.

THE BEST LAID PLANS (AND LANDMINES)

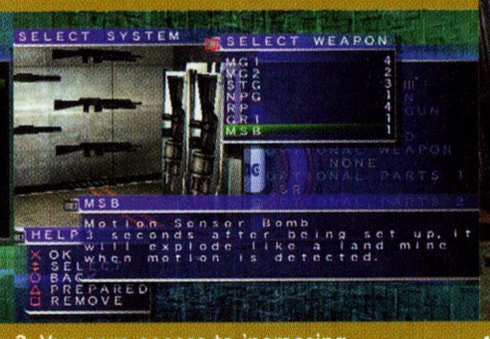
Like the thoughtful considering of a wardrobe's content before a night on the town, it's important that you deck your combat suit in its finest threads before hitting the modern battlefield. Afterall You don't want to be seen in last season's hardware do you?



1. Examine the general plan of the map. Are you facing enemies at close range, or will Sir be sniping from distance?



2. The warehouse. Here you get a chance to equip your robot for all varieties of modern conflict.



3. You earn access to increasing numbers of weapon as you progress. The shotgun is particularly devastating.



4. Finished, polished up and ready. Just put on your favourite going-out record and it's time to step-out.









(Left) The battlesuit's designs are agreeably chunky, disregarding all streamlining for a mean beefy look. Oh yes. (Centre) A standard set of pick-ups can be used to replenish your ammunition and other things. (Right) Shooting things features prominently.

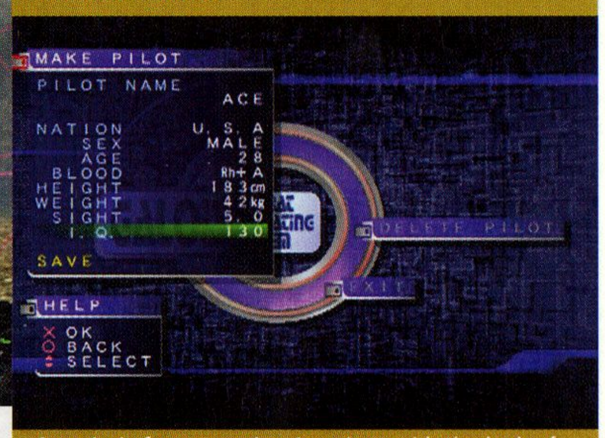


While generally sparse, the set-pieces are lush.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

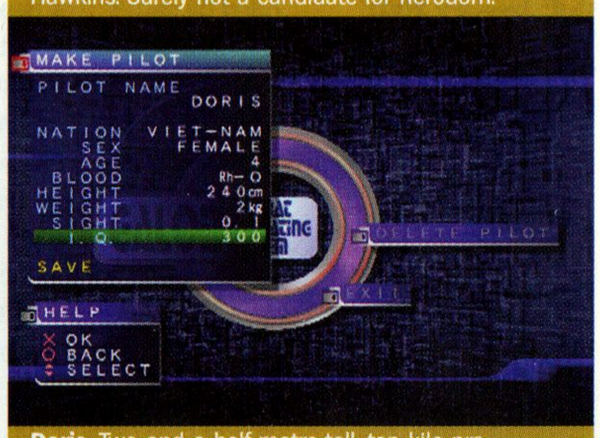
Before you can start a campaign, you have to design your character, setting your name, blood-group, weight, IQ and all those other things designers put in descriptions of beat-'em-up characters yet make no difference to the actual game.



Ace. A six-foot strapping American with the look of eagles is easily within the boundaries of acceptability for these things.



Cyril. Over a hundred. Three-hundred kilos. The sort of IQ that makes root vegetables look like Stephen Hawkins. Surely not a candidate for herodom.



Doris. Two-and-a-half metre tall, ten-kilo pre-pubescent with the IQ of two MENSA members strapped together.



Almost all buildings can be destroyed with a few rounds. Do so.

//Gun Griffon can be considered one of the best PS2 shooters yet//

extent of a situation before applying your military might, or taking out straggling enemy units from a safe distance. The jump-pack's an entirely different pleasure, allowing you to soar dramatically above the battlefield before your jets exhaust themselves. Either as an escape route from approaching phalanxes of anti-you weapons, to out-manoeuvre a nearby mech-suit or just to live out your *Apocalypse Now* gunship fantasies with a fresh robotic fetish, its permanently joyous. You'll probably find yourself using it to excess just due to the primordial kick it applies to the proto-human nerve-centres.

In fact, the jets add to the whole feel of fluidity that personifies the game. Despite the weighty intertia of your vessel, once you've mastered the controls your (apparently) roller skate wearing titan's capable of zipping about like a particularly heavily-armed dancer from *Starlight Express*. And it'll be needed.

Each of the six basic levels throws you into a free form battle, packed with friendly and hostile troops. While everyone merrily goes about hammering each other, you choose where, when and how to integrate yourself into the conflict. This normally means speeding around like a headless robo-chicken, shooting whatever you can, then scavenging resupply icons from their steaming and obliterated chassis.

The game puts more of a weight on improvised tactics within a level than prior planning – the reading of a situation rather that preparedness, basically. Despite this, each level is described beforehands in *Dad's Army*-styled arrows-laden maps, noting where everyone is supposed to be at any particular time. One obvious fault – which causes considerable confusion when you actually go into a mission – is that when describing objectives it doesn't actually show you pictures of them. Since the battlefields are so hectic, this means that identification of primary targets proves troublesome.

Equally, while in play, access to the map function would have been appreciated. The first few times you play a level it's all too easy to get lost due to the limited strategic information given to you inside a game. Since there's only six basic levels, with an extra one possible to unlock from each, you might even consider this a ploy to extend its playing time artificially. Also annoying is an inability to quickly discover which objectives have been achieved and which of them remain to be completed.

While clearly flawed, *Gun Griffon Blaze* never stops being entertaining. With the ability to fully customise your suit, then charge into a post-human battlefield, spraying annihilation like an avenging storm of a long forgotten pagan god, it can't help but appeal. You may long for a random scenario maker or split-screen multiplayer options – both of which are sadly lacking – but *Gun Griffon* can still be considered one of the best shooters on the PS2 yet. As a nostalgic Eighties giant-robot enthusiast might put it, this is more in the league of Optimus Prime than Bumblebee. ☐ **Kieron Gillen**

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE

Why we'd buy it:	**Why we'd leave it:**	**Piloting a technological wonder that makes the Terminator look like C-3PO is bound to hold a visceral appeal, which *Gun Griffon Blaze* captures with considerable flair.**
- Do you like first-person shooters where you can blow up robots *and* large buildings? - Do you have dreams of *being* a robot?	- Despite the size of your ships, it's a little short - The lack of a multiplayer option	

Graphics	Initially dull, but atmospheric depths	07
Sound	A little muddled, lacking chaos	06
Gameplay	Slick robot fisticuffs neologisms	08
Life span	Unlocking sections, but still limited	06

07

PlayStation.2 VERDICT





Defeating a boss produces a satisfyingly BIG explosion...



SILPHEED: THE LOST PLANET

Retro gaming: it's hip, it's here, it's abysmally slow and painful to play.





Publisher: Swing
Developer: Treasure/GameArts
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: January 2001
Web site: www.gamearts.co.jp/products/silpheed

Back story

Silpheed appeared on the Mega CD in the mid-Nineties, where the grainy FMV and average shoot-'em-up action marked it as a moderate success. Other 'successes' on the Mega CD included gameplay-free classics such as *Voyeur* and *Night Trap*.

'Twitch gaming' used to be everything. Just for a moment, slip back to a time when the first *Gradius* came on the scene. A time where arcades were ruled by games that needed acid-fast reactions. You knew any game that took your money would make you survive on instinct, plan wrist-shattering fast manoeuvres and force you to rethink every action on the fly – this was the *only* genre. Even on home systems, aside from the no-rush sessions of *Chess* or the ponderous text adventures, this was all there was. Rules were simple – avoid, kill, stay alive. Three lives, no continues, no time to think. Insert coin. Press fire. Hold fire. One life left. Panic. Wrench the joystick left, right, Game Over.

Pac-Man was twitch. The first platformers were twitch. Driving games were twitch. And, at the forefront of the genre, stealing ten pence pieces in chip shops across Britain, was *Space Invaders*. It was the epitome of twitch gaming – fast, frantic, panicked and addictive. Like all classic works, it spawned a million imitators, and with every leap in technology comes a reinvention of the original shoot-'em-up. Everyone has a favourite: *Galaxians*, *1944*, *R-Type*, *Xenon II*, *Gradius* – maybe even the original *Silpheed*. Some things got better, some things got worse; later arrivals in the genre offered the player a choice of weapon, and the hapless, indomitable aliens' arsenal improved from a single dot to a deadly orange circle. *Silpheed: The Lost Planet* comes 23 years after *Space Invaders* first hit the arcades, and, weaponry aside, nothing much has changed. You insert a coin. You press fire. You wrench left, right, Game Over.

For those who are still confused about *Silpheed*'s simplistic gaming world, here's a quick tutorial. You can move left, right, up, down, and you can fire. Wave upon wave of aliens attack from the top of the screen. There are many more of them than there are of you, but the odds are still stacked slightly in your favour, since their technology is still at a stage where they must attack you with small orange circles. Don't pity them – despite their aggressive ineptitude, they appear to have ruthlessly taken over and destroyed a planet, where everyone is obviously much worse than you at avoiding those small orange circles.

DIGITAL DISEASE

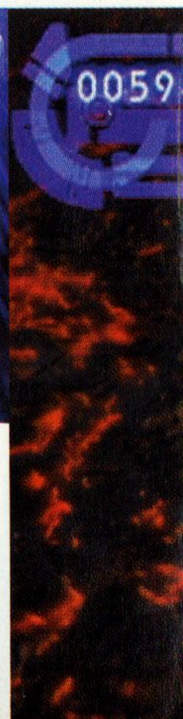
Naturally, it's this skill at avoiding these aliens which makes you the obvious choice to counter their advances. Off you set, spacecraft roaring, to destroy what must be destroyed and to gasp and coo at your next generation console rendering the destruction in beautiful 128 bit splendour. Which, since it's not really doing anything that the MegaDrive wasn't doing years ago (albeit with pixels rather than polygons, and a slightly less spectacular colour palette), it should manage with style and ease. Right?

//*Silpheed* offers no immersion, just irritation and distraction//

Wrong. Because *Silpheed*'s afflicted with the digital disease that's been killing shooters since their 1977 inception – slow-down. Everything moves quite smoothly for a while, but when the missiles start to fly, the pace starts to grind. It's unacceptable, because game flow in this genre is so crucial. If it's fractured, the gamer's concentration is broken. The part of their consciousness that was driving them to instinctively avoid, well, everything really, suddenly falters. It stops you being drawn into the action, there's no immersion, just distraction, irritation.

Silpheed's also woefully undersized. Play it in Normal mode, and it shouldn't take you more than an afternoon to make your way through. Short, and not too sweet, but not an entirely distressing experience. The spot effects are dizzying and spectacular, the explosions satisfyingly electric. Equally, the way the polygon structures spiral





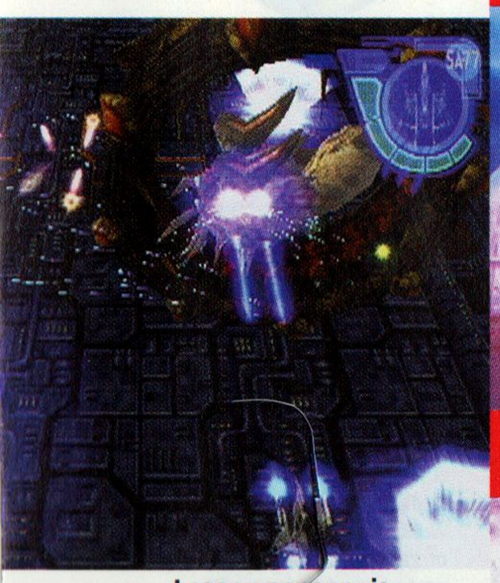
Twin airplanes, who might seem friendly at first but soon degenerate into biomechanical fury.



...like this one, here. Radially fantastic.



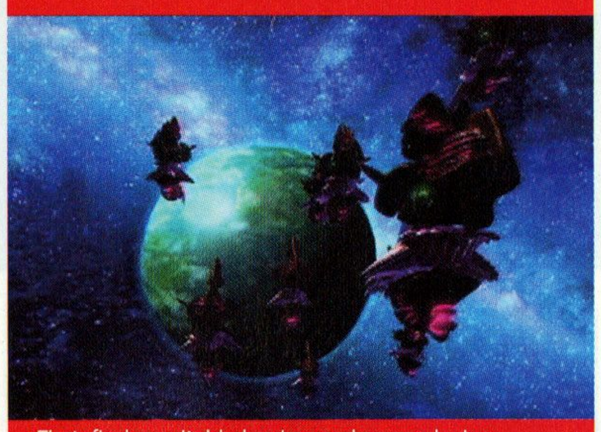
The first end of level boss. A purple spider, with painful legs.



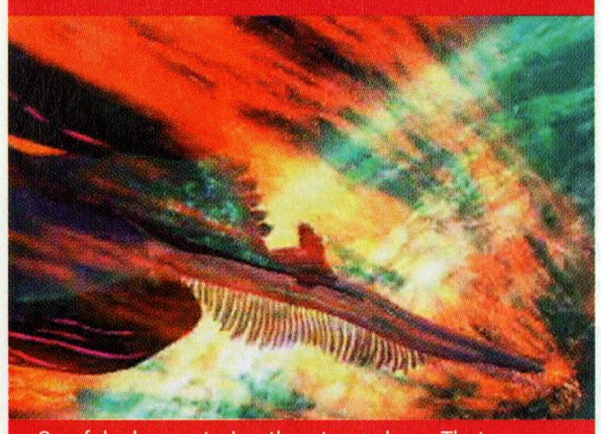
Laser weaponry is powerful, but has a long reload time.

ALIEN INVASION

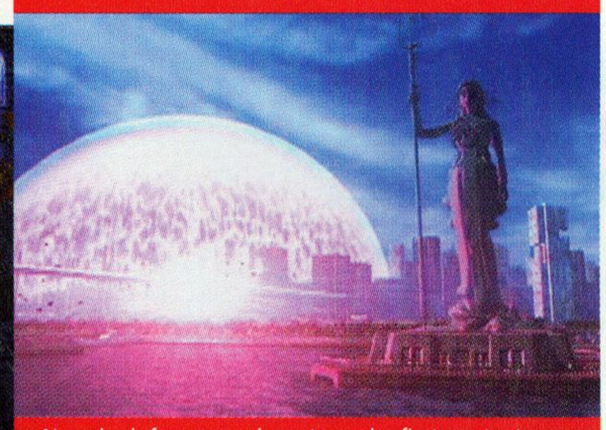
Thinking of invading a nearby world? Conquer all with our step-by-step guide.



First, find a suitably benign and peace-loving planet. Here, this looks harmless enough.



Careful when entering the atmosphere. That burning entry sensation can really chafe.



Now, look for somewhere to make first contact. Seems quiet enough. Then...



Boom. There. That'll show those spineless hippies what for.



The FMV is dramatic, but the story hardly grabs the attention. There are some aliens, you shoot the aliens, The End.

around the player is used to disorientating and creative effect. The game actually gets better the further you progress but then it ends, leaving you with memories of a stilted, unsatisfying experience.

Part of that comes from the peculiar level design. Most of the enemies appear in well-ordered groups and attack in strict patterns. Where *R-Type* and *Gradius* throw thousands of invaders your way, *Silpheed* takes a more strategic, logical progressive approach, and it's less frenetic for it. Naturally, boss-ships punctuate the waves of small fighters. They're huge biomechanical creations that follow numerous attack strategies. You'll learn to avoid them. You'll learn to deal with the associated slow-down too, but you shouldn't have to, especially in especially a game that's no better than games that were running on home entertainment systems 15 years ago.

Okay. The history lesson's over. It's a shame that *Silpheed*'s so short, so flawed, because there's certainly a place for something that offers five-minute blasts of, no nonsense, adrenaline pulsing action. Twitch gaming used to be everything, remember? But games like this, poorly made echoes of decade-old triumphs, are traitors to the vector-streaked alien-invaded past, and remind us why that has changed. Game Over. ☐ **Ste Curran**

WHO'S DA BOSS?

Like all shooters since *R-Type*, *Silpheed*'s laden with big, galaxy-threatening creatures desperate to stop your progress. Here's just a few of them.



Huge Space Spider
Purple, naturally, in the official team strip of one of *Silpheed*'s warring factions. Only mildly deadly, like a really messy bout of the flu.



Metal Galaxy Bat
Obviously deadly, since rather than orange circles, he fires orange spikes. Shoot him in the face to dispose of him.



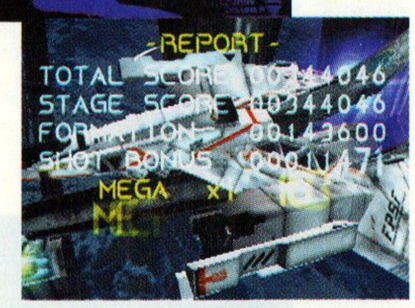
Dangerous Fire Limb
A bit like an octopus, only with ten legs and made from angry orange electricity. Has capacity to spit nasty blue fire.



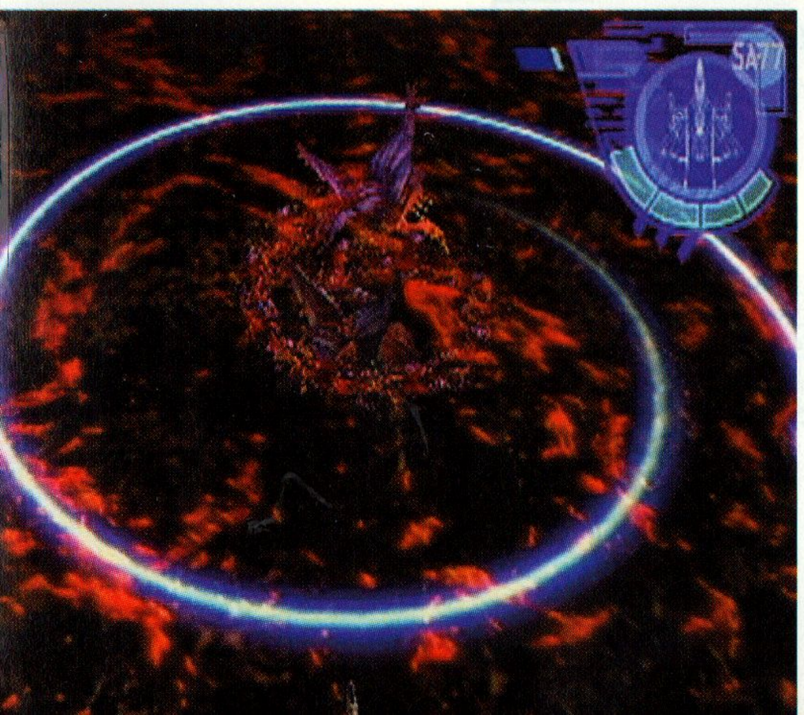
Cyclops Lava Head
He lives in the lava. He knocks over rocks. He'll kill you with his evil face-rays, and then fade back into the molten liquid.



More points means more weaponry.



A handy round up of your own inadequacy.



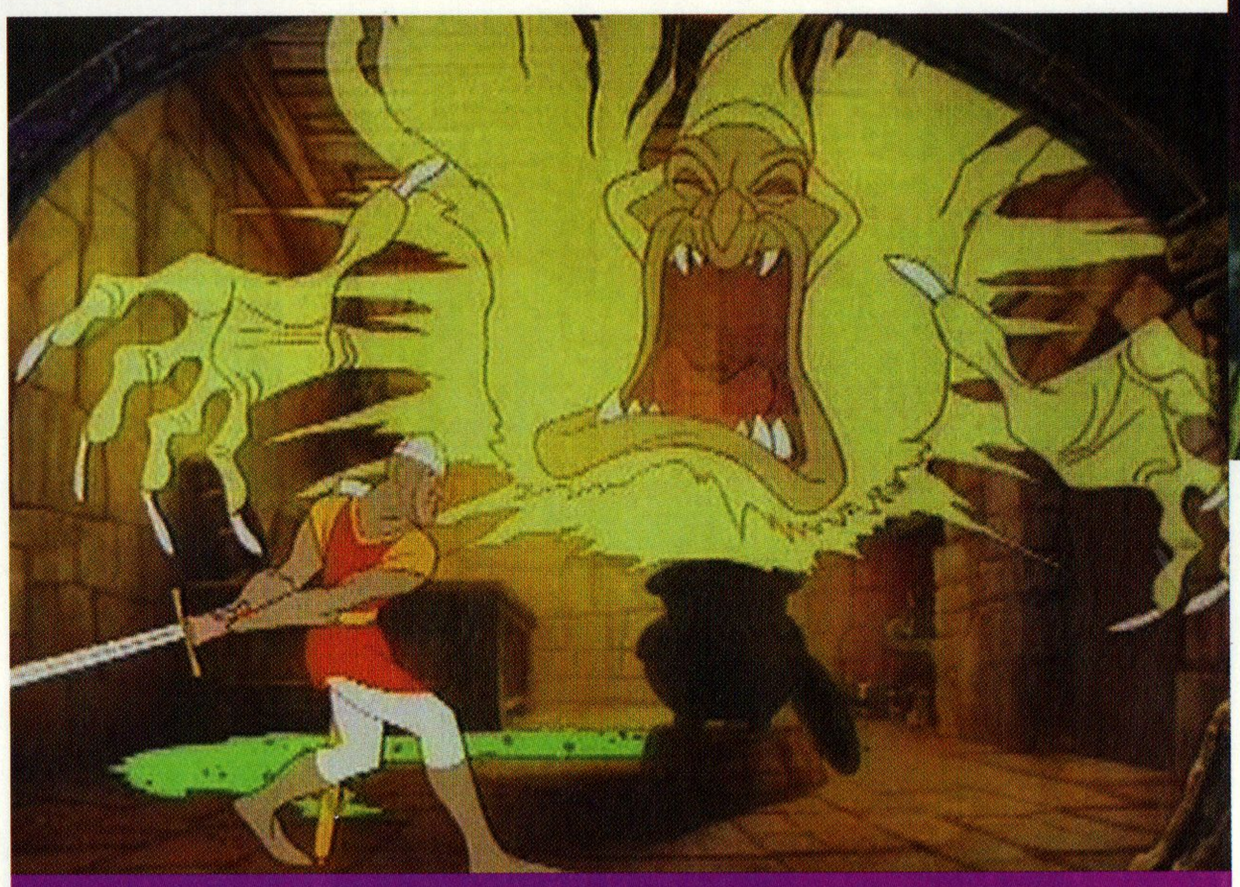
SILPHEED: THE LOST PLANET

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Polygon-for-pixel translation of an Eighties shooter, with shocking slow-down and lacking a single original idea. Avoid.
- Alien invasions are all the rage these days - Twitch gamers deserve something for their PS2	- It's as far from the future of videogaming as any current PS2 title - Little substance behind the twinkly graphical touches	

Graphics	Occasionally dizzying, but mostly mundane	04
Sound	Shoot. Bang. Shoot. Boom. Shoot. Crash	05
Gameplay	Initially fun, ruined by slow-down	03
Life span	So short, it's almost a demo	02

03

PlayStation 2 VERDICT





DRAGON'S LAIR

Dragon's Lair hero Dirk dares to show off his 17-year-old animation on PS2. Fool.

Publisher: Digital Leisure
Developer: Cinematronics
Price: £24.99
Players: 1
Out: Now
Web site: www.digitalleisure.com

Back story
Don Bluth provided the animation, Rick Dyer the game design. Colleagues thought they were crazy, but after six years in the making and at a cost of $1.3 million *Dragon's Lair* was eventually rolled into arcade centres across the globe. It generated an unheard-of notoriety and since then has been produced on nearly every format from the Atari ST to the Philips CDi.

In 1983 Cinematronic's *Dragon's Lair* was the darling of arcade owners across the globe. It is now the butt of many jokes. This short – and genuine – game guide perhaps best encapsulates the *Dragon's Lair* phenomenon and its relevance to modern gaming: 'right, left, up, left, right, left, right.' Occasionally you get to use a sword.

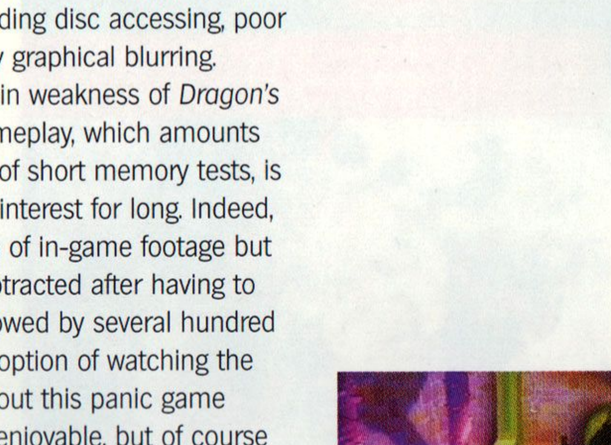
In essence, it's a traditional fantasy adventure in which hero Dirk the Daring is tasked with rescuing a princess from the dragon's lair of the title. Dirk is not the brightest of knights, and the player must guide him through a series of rooms containing anything from magical potions to electrified fences. A flashing cursor in the lower right-hand corner of the screen gives the player a split second to press the correct key. Select the wrong command and Dirk dies an amusing if annoying death. This event takes the player back to the beginning of the level to start the whole process again.

In fairness, it is not difficult to understand why *Dragon's Lair* caused such a stir back in the early Eighties. Next to the two-frame animation of *Space Invaders* and the beeping sound effects of *Moon Cresta*, *Dragon's Lair* looked and sounded like something that had dropped out of a time hole. How ironic, then, that the LaserDisc technology responsible for the unprecedented speech quality and Don Bluth's sublime animation has not translated to the DVD format at all well. The bold colours and crisp resolution of the original have both failed to make it to this DVD version. Instead you will be treated to grinding disc accessing, poor colour saturation and ugly graphical blurring.

//Incredibly limited gameplay is not going to sustain your interest for long//

But this is not the main weakness of *Dragon's Lair*. Incredibly limited gameplay, which amounts to no more than a series of short memory tests, is not going to sustain your interest for long. Indeed, there are only 22 minutes of in-game footage but this becomes severely protracted after having to endure instant death, followed by several hundred more instant deaths. The option of watching the whole game through without this panic game mechanic is much more enjoyable, but of course then renders the title non-interactive.

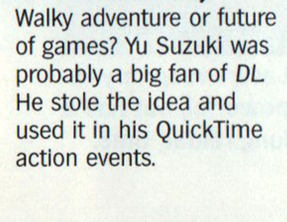
There is a small amount of pleasure to be squeezed out of the game and it will hold fond memories for those who played the original, while being surrounded by open-mouthed youths without enough pocket money to afford the 50-pence-per-play cost. Ultimately, however, you would be better hunting out MB's *Simon* from the loft for some much more sociable multiplayer action. ☐ **Mark Walbank**



Bluth's animation is still ace. Unfortunately, the gameplay is as bad as it was 1983.

MASTERMIND

Three more games that will test the powers of your memory.



PaRappa The Rapper (SCEE/PSone)
It adds a funky rap beat to the button depressions but in its heart it's the child of *Dragon's Lair*.



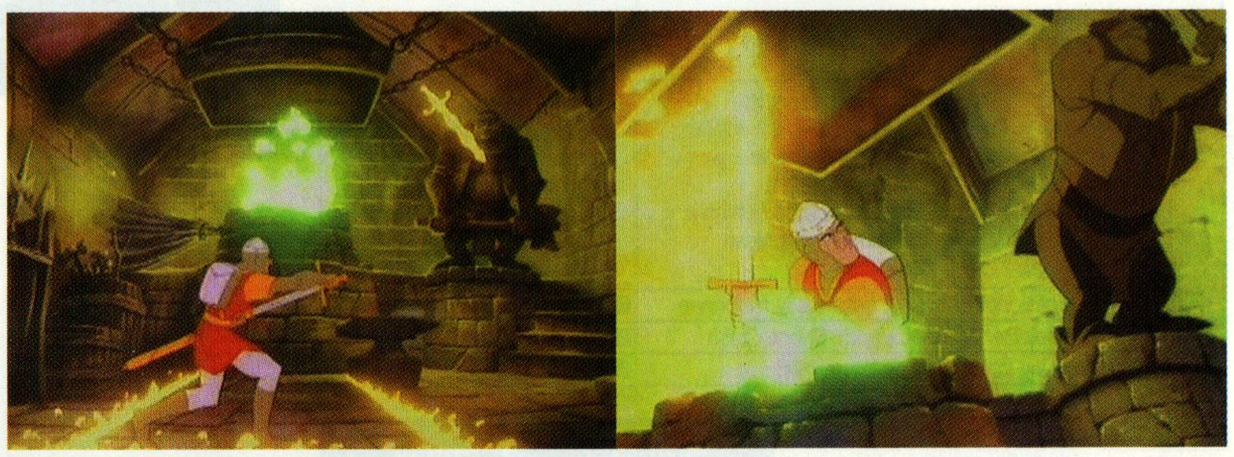
Simon (MB Games/Car boot sales)
Released in 1978, MB Games' four-colour, memory-test game was as popular with girls as it was with boys. No one plays it now, though.



Shenmue (Sega AM2/Dreamcast)
Walky adventure or future of games? Yu Suzuki was probably a big fan of *DL*. He stole the idea and used it in his QuickTime action events.



Dodge squares just like at the local arcade centre.



Up, right, left, down or sword. That sums up *Dragon's Lair*.

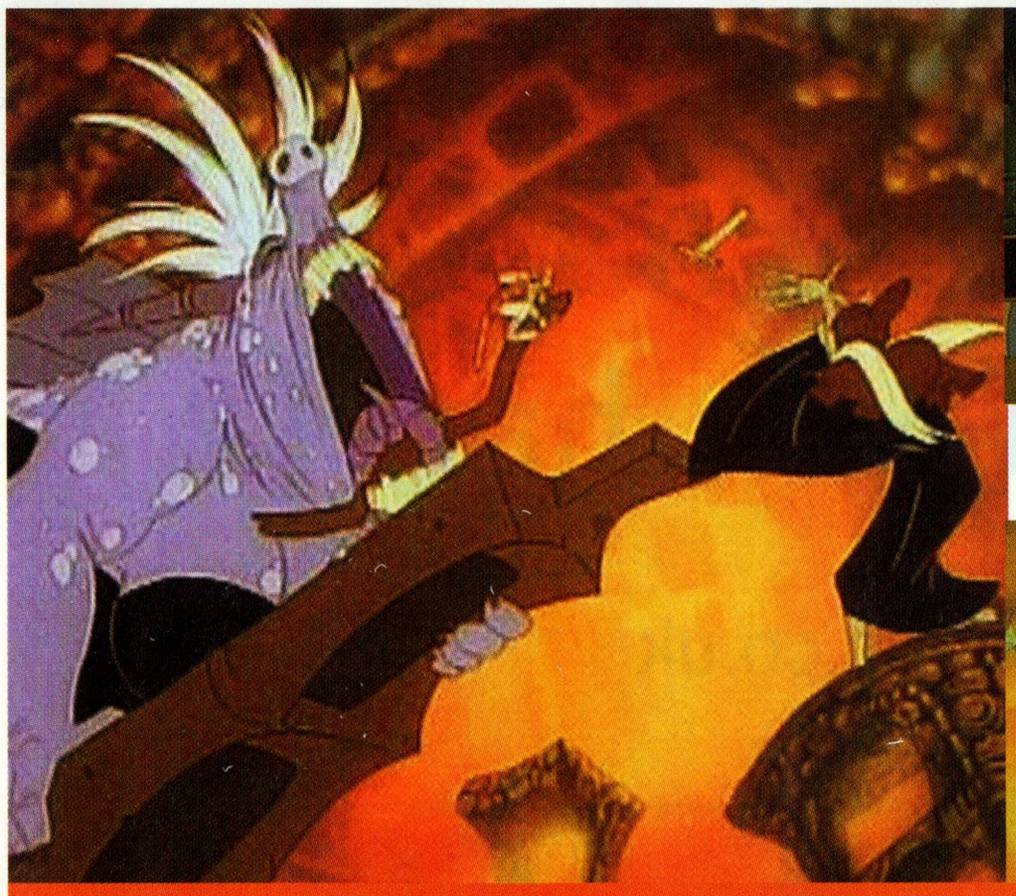
DRAGON'S LAIR

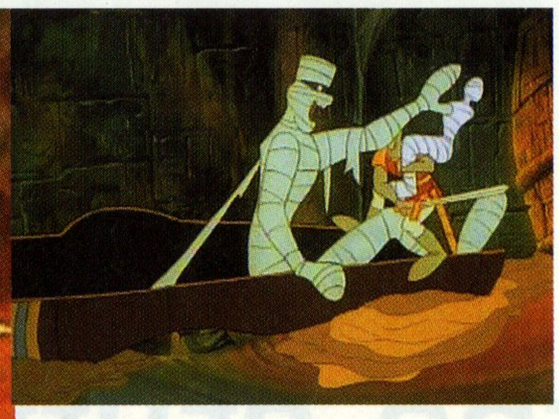
Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Seventeen-year-old technology crammed on to a DVD disc – and it bloody well shows.
- The animation still impresses and nostalgia junkies may find something to enjoy	- It amounts to nothing more than a memory test and severely questions the definition of gameplay	

Graphics	Good in 1983, laughable today	03
Sound	Has not translated well to DVD	02
Gameplay	Limited in the extreme	02
Life span	You won't be playing it the day after purchase	01

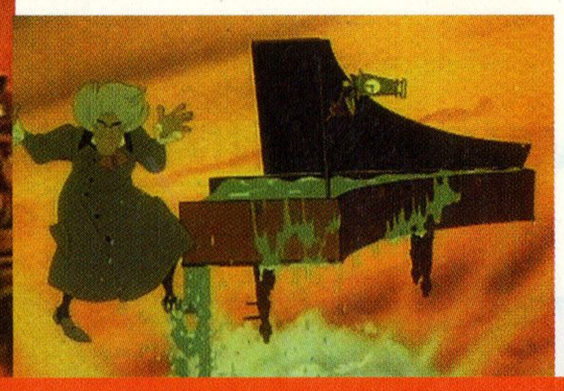
02

PlayStation 2 VERDICT





Dragon's Lair II at least has an interesting, surreal quality.



DRAGON'S LAIR II: TIMEWARP

The vast improvements made upon the original fail to port to DVD or PS2.

Publisher: Digital Leisure
Developer: Cinematronics
Price: £24.99
Players: 1
Out: Now
Web site: www.digitalleisure.com

Back story

Dragon's Lair II: Timewarp took so long to reach fruition that technology had overtaken the power of the LaserDisc format. The novelty that had once attracted people to the original had vanished by 1991. *Street Fighter II* now ruled the arcades and the hit that the creators expected became no more than a footnote in videogame history.

Considering the success of *Dragon's Lair* it seems strange that Cinematronics took eight years to produce a sequel. The LaserDisc technology was temperamental and arcade owners frustrated by placing 'out of order' signs on their *Dragon's Lair* cabinets were hardly looking forward to more of the same. The predictable gameplay mechanics also saw move lists swapping hands and everyone who enjoyed the game staying on for the full duration.

By the time *Dragon's Lair II: Timewarp* hit the arcades in 1991 LaserDisc technology had improved considerably and a random gameplay element was added to the proceedings to make cheat sheets harder to produce. Unfortunately, this means that the gameplay mechanics were made even more infuriating. The levels in *Dragon's Lair II* are generally longer than those in the first game so the whole instant-death-back-to-the-beginning-of-the-section frustration is made even more painful.

Dragon's Lair II: Timewarp may have been better than the arcade original in nearly every department but the enhancements have not made it on to Digital Leisure's DVD conversion. Although the gameplay mechanics are much the same, the plot at least sees Dirk the Daring encountering vastly more varied situations due to its innovative time-travel element. Dirk must search out Princess Daphne, who this time has been captured by the evil wizard Mordroc and is being transported through different time periods.

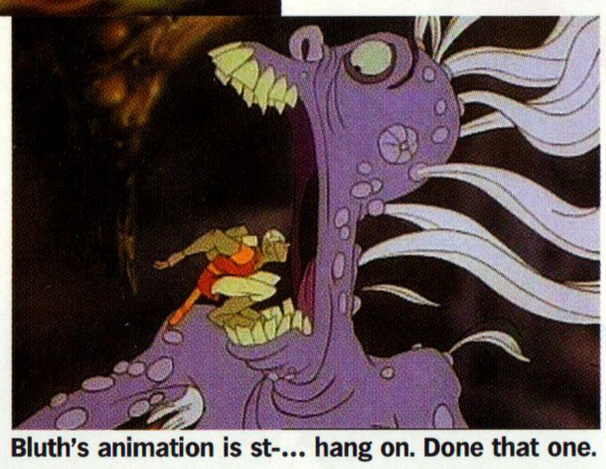
The quality of the arcade graphics may have been improved but this is not discernible on this DVD version. Sound and picture quality are both poor. The extra speech so lovingly produced for the LaserDisc arcade version is completely cut to shreds and at times completely unintelligible.

But a crime even more despicable than any of the above is converting a game for use on PlayStation 2 that doesn't even respond to your commands. The cursor system in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen is the same as that in *Dragon's Lair* but at times bafflingly shows commands which do not correspond to your own key depressions. It is galling to reach the last segment of a level only to be killed by the irascible nature of the input sensitivity.

Dragon's Lair II: Timewarp is a tawdry product. Those wishing to relive some of their youth by coming back to the *Dragon's Lair* universe will be sorely disappointed. If a quality port of the LaserDisc information had been executed professionally then at least those wanting a nostalgia trip could have been satisfied. This will appeal to no one at no time. □ **Mark Walbank**

//The crime is converting a game for PS2 that doesn't even respond to your commands//





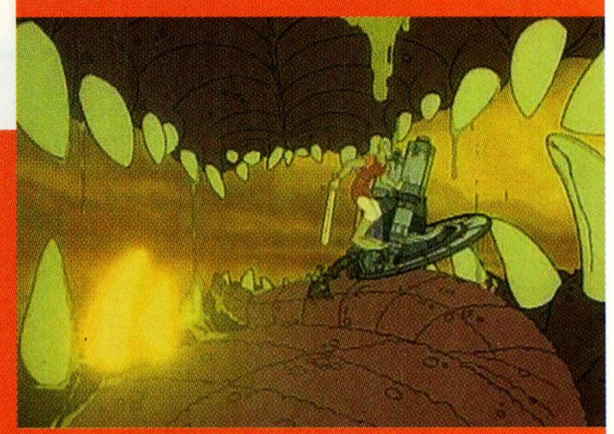
Bluth's animation is st-... hang on. Done that one.

TWISTED TALES

Dragon's Lair II **is a much more surreal adventure than Dirk's first outing. Here's the plot in brief.**



Princess Daphne goes missing and Dirk's mother-in-law is none too happy about his indifference.



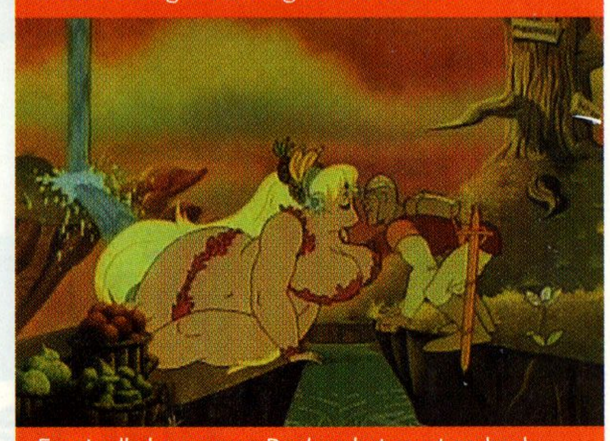
Dirk must retrieve his sword while avoiding the jaws of this dinosaur.



He is transported to the world of *Alice in Wonderland* to defeat the Queen of Hearts.



Not content with the previous weirdness, Dirk must face a giant Ludwig Van Beethoven.



Eventually he rescues Daphne but must go back to face his in-laws.

DRAGON'S LAIR II: TIMEWARP

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Pull some fingernails out in a random manner and you will have some idea of how this game plays.
- Only technophile sadomasochists would find any pleasure in this title	- It's a poor conversion with flawed gameplay and erratic controls	

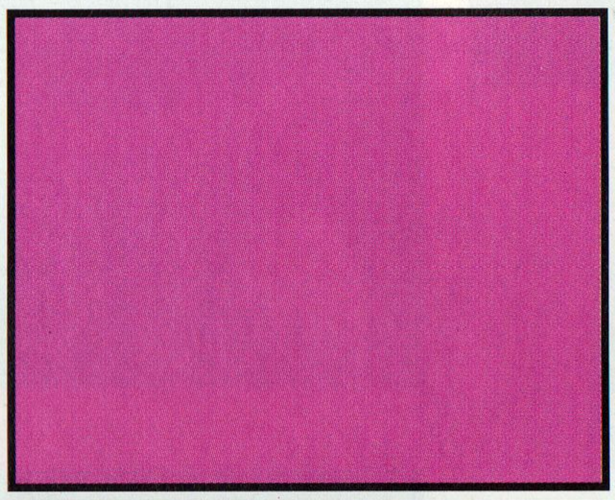
Graphics	Surreal and imaginative if slightly pixellated	03
Sound	Grating speech which is unrecognisable	01
Gameplay	Search for it if you dare	01
Life span	The time it takes to read this line	01

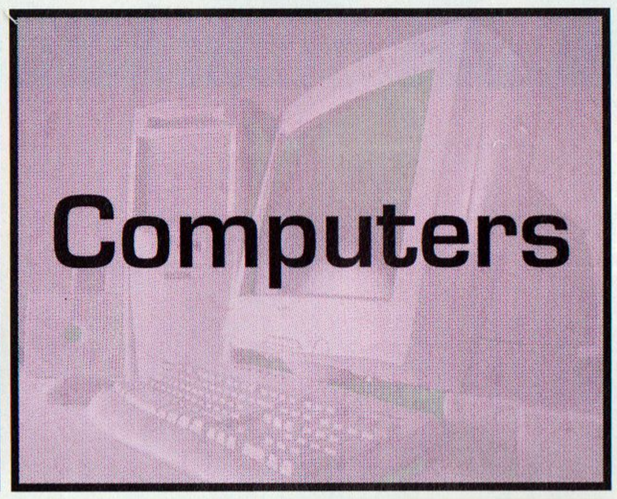
01

PlayStation.2 VERDICT

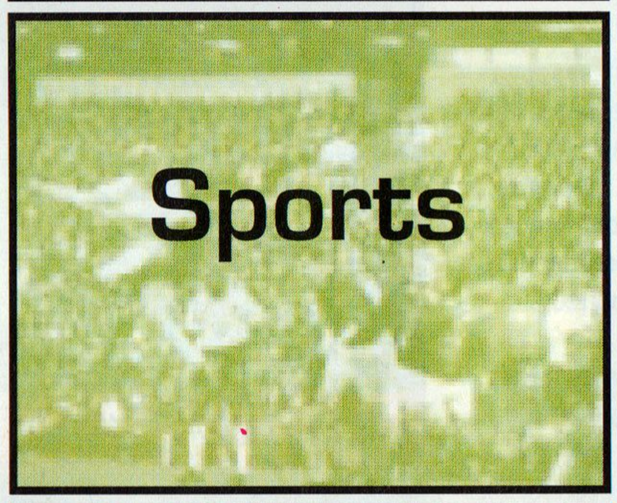
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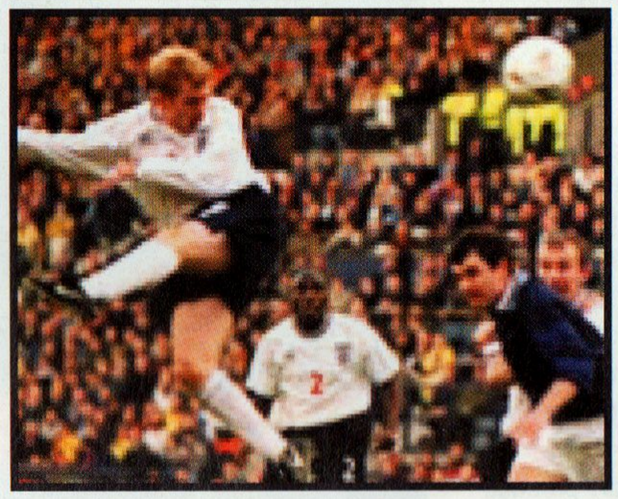


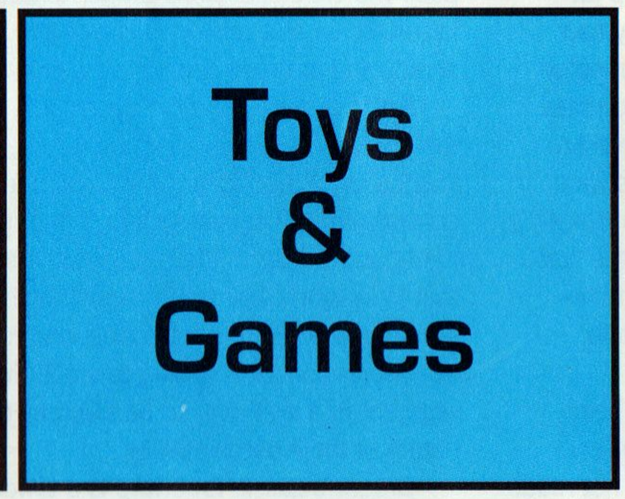


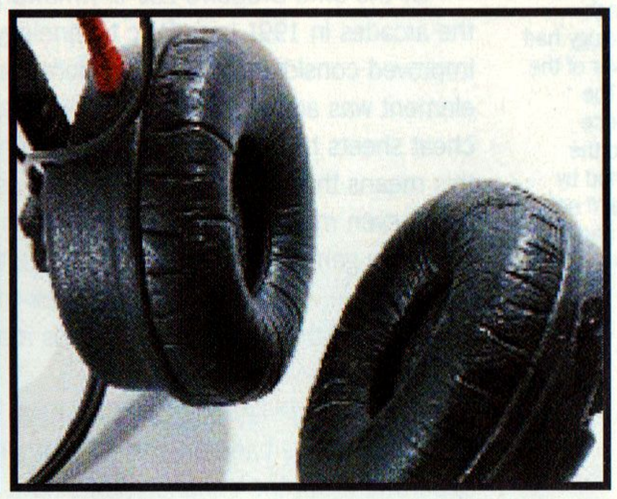












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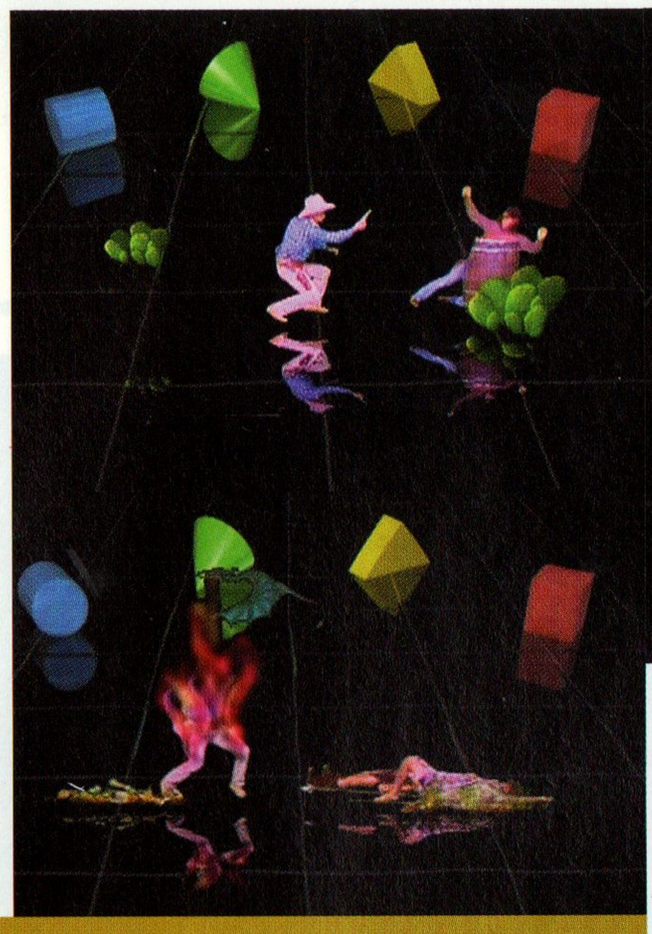
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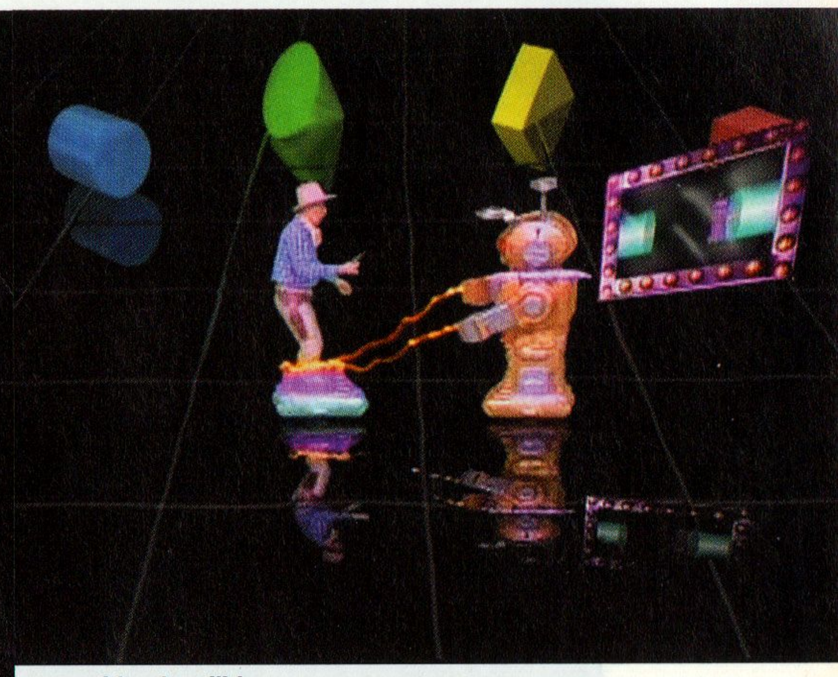
www.FutureAuctions.co.uk



It's just like watching a film. A really bad film, where you have to squint, and where the whole experience is so bad you actually hurt inside. Ow.







Your friends will be amazed when they see these next-generation graphics! Look! And just wait until you see them moving! Well, jerking.

HOLOGRAM TIME TRAVELER

If this is the future of videogaming, then kill me now.

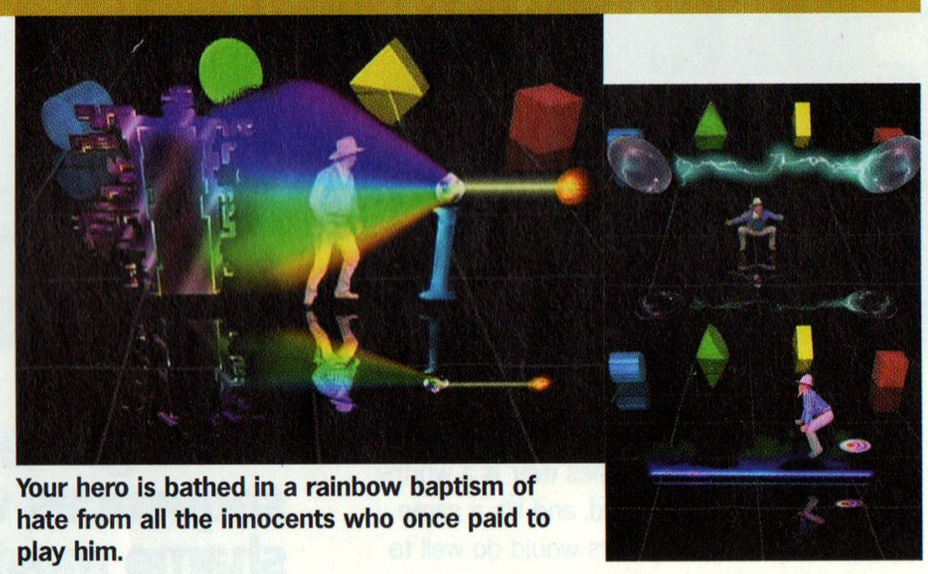
Publisher: Digital Leisure
Developer: Sega
Price: £24.99
Players: 1
Out: Now
Web site: www.digitalleisure.com

Back story
In 1991, gamers were entranced by the prospect of genuine, real-life hologram entertainment in their local arcades. Then they saw it was rubbish, and forgot all about it. Until now.

Sega's *Hologram Time Traveler* made a fortune in the arcades of the early Nineties, and here's how. It came in a squat white cube, capped with a translucent dome, and promised the future: hologram gaming, except for here, now, and available to all. What it actually offered was no more than a fuzzed-up, jerky version of classic idiot-favourite *Dragon's Lair*, but no matter. The plan was that you would arrive at the coin-op, and despite your initial scepticism, you would put in a pound 'for a laugh' The machine would then take your pound, and display a grainy cowboy for your confused pleasure. You concentrated, waiting for your chance to interact with the fuzzy action. You failed to hit the right button at the right millisecond. The cowboy died. Your friends laughed at you.

And that was it – money wasting and peer humiliation, all in one neat, easy-to-consume package. Perfect for stupid gamers everywhere, then, and that's the only target audience appropriate for this, the re-release of *Time Traveler* in a DVD format. It's supposed to be playable on standard DVD players, and has a lovely yellow star on the front proclaiming its suitability for PS2. A good marketing gimmick when PS2 gamers are so desperate for new titles, but a lie, since when this gamer played through it on his PS2, it jerked horrendously every time it required a button-pressing. Still, that's one step up from its test run on a standard home DVD player, where it actually failed to work at all.

Anyway, let's imagine you find yourself in a situation where you have the hardware that'll get the game working, and are prepared to wear the red and green glasses that do an appalling recreation of the original's hologram effect. Think for a second: are you actually prepared to waste 25 quid on ten minutes of sparse interactivity and a lifetime of feeling like an idiot? Here's a longer and infinitely more rewarding hologram game: go see *Jaws 3D*, and guess how many people the shark'll bite. *Time Traveler*'s only redeeming features are that it didn't get stuck in our PS2's CD drawer, and it didn't try to burn our office down.



Your hero is bathed in a rainbow baptism of hate from all the innocents who once paid to play him.

Even if *Hologram Time Traveler* does qualify as a slice of gaming history – which it could do only to demonstrate people's stupidity when shown things that are shiny and new – saying that's justification for owning a copy is ridiculous. There are many more affordable bits of gaming history available for purchase at your local second-hand shop, and none of them are as inane as this.
Want a neat summing up? This game is pathetic, and the people who decided there was a fast buck to be made by porting it to DVD are evil.
The end. □ **Ste Curran**

FIRE 'EM, COWBOY!

The back of the box promises "non-stop action." Here's a taste of it. Careful now, watch that adrenaline...



Two space thugs teleport in. Ohmigod. Well, hit fire, then...



Got one. One left. Hit fire again.



Oh. The first one has inexplicably turned into a rocket. Crazy.



And now it's coming straight for me! Must... jump... must... destroy... DVD...

HOLOGRAM TIME TRAVELER

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Give the money to charity instead. It's far more rewarding, and you'll feel much better about yourself.
- We wouldn't	- Too many reasons to list, but essentially because it's terrible	

Graphics	Fuzzy eye-straining digital humans	00
Sound	Appalling acting. Whooshy effects	01
Gameplay	Little interaction, no fun	01
Life span	Play it once, throw it out	00

00

PlayStation.2 VERDICT

PSone™

Edited by: Lee Hall/Ryan Butt







Lovers of traditional RPGs will absolutely adore Square's latest epic, which is set in a lavish, medieval world.

FINAL FANTASY IX

Once again, those RPG masters prove it's hip to be Square.

Pub: Square Europe
Developer: Squaresoft
Price: £29.99
Players: One
Out: January 2001

The final PSone instalment of the greatest RPG series ever is a worthy swansong indeed, and it's a game most PS2 owners would do well to snap up. *Final Fantasy VIII* began with 25 minutes of dull exposition in which you were forced to flick through speech bubbles. But *Final Fantasy IX* indulges in no such tedium. Instead you are thrust into the action as Zidane Tribal, a scampish thief, and you're soon battling a mysterious foe.

For fans of traditional RPGs, *FFIX* is a tour de force. The move back to the olde worlde look, and away from the 'swords in space' feel of *VII* and *VIII* is a welcome one. Better still, the game's FMV sequences would have been unimaginable just a couple of years ago and would shame most PS2 launch titles. As usual, the rendered backgrounds are also fabulous. It's not a game you can delve into occasionally, though. After leaving it for a couple of weeks you'll spend just as long working out what you have and haven't done. Thankfully, a new on-screen help feature means you won't endlessly search every nook and cranny for clues to aid your quest. Other welcome changes include an increased party of four protagonists and yet another injection of the spectacular into the Guardian Forces sequences. The Forces are awesome beasts you summon during battles.

//The game's FMV sequences would shame most PS2 launch titles//

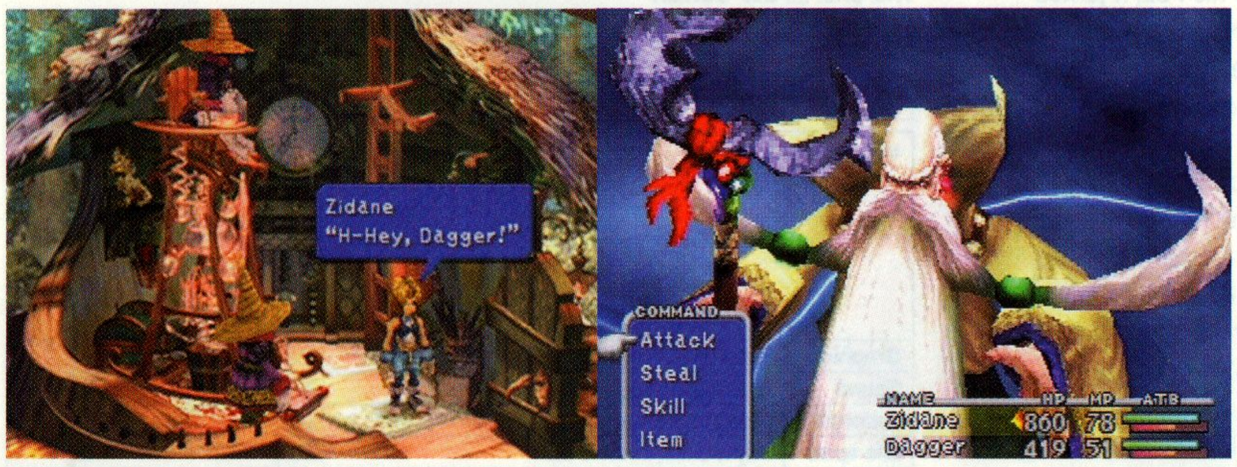
With *FFIX*, Square could easily have knocked out a half-arsed retrospective. In fact the game is a fantastic RPG. The almost-obligatory elements are there – a Princess to rescue, a patriarchal middle-aged companion, Edward Steiner, and of course that famous *Final Fantasy* motif, the flying ship.

Many of the plot devices are familiar too, though the occasionally directionless feel of earlier games has been reigned in, so much so that the gameplay sometimes feels a touch stifling. The repertoire of sub-games is expansive, but not as engrossing as the Chocobo racing and snowboarding in *FFVII*. Elsewhere, the much-hyped 'Active Time Events' are pretty bland; passive cut-scenes in which you see simultaneous events taking place elsewhere. They do, however, preclude tenuous flashback sequences.

Final Fantasy IX oozes class and is unlikely to be surpassed in the genre until the tenth instalment on PS2. Believe the hype. Only *Madden 2001*, *TimeSplitters* and *SSX* rival this little beauty on Sony's new dream machine. ☐ **Lee Hall**



Square's last PSone *Fantasy* boasts some of the most spectacular enemies yet.



The combination of jaw-dropping graphics and sheer size sets the tenth series apart.

PSone™

FINAL FANTASY IX

Graphics The finest on PSone. Bar none	10
Sound Sound: More naff Japanese 'tunes'	06
Gameplay Not as cluttered as in *FFVIII*	09
Life span It's huge, but best played continuously	09

A real high to end on. It's not for everyone but all will gasp in awe at Square's continued technical brilliance.

09

VERDICT

READY 2 RUMBLE 2

Seconds out, round two of this comedy contest!

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Point Of View Inc
Price: £29.99
Players: 1-2
Out: Now

If EA's *Knockout Kings* is a stern-faced Tyson, *Ready 2 Rumble* is Apollo Creed, strutting around and gettin' down to James Brown. In this second bout the main attraction is still very much the maladjusted collection of misfits posing as boxers, and every stereotype is catered for. A few of the characters are in as standard to bolster the original line-up, but most have to be unlocked, like the unlikely contender Michael Jackson (me's gonna Moonwalk over your ass!). There's a Career mode, in which you can train up your champ and hopefully demolish a succession of other dudes and dudettes en route to that belt. The two-player versus mode is what this game is about, though. ☐ **Ryan Butt**



As in the PS2 version, Jacko appears. Feel free to knock his face off with rumble shots.

PSone™

Will have you in stitches for the first two hours, barely amuse for five, and totally turn you off after a few days.

06

VERDICT

007 RACING

You'll not be expecting this, Mr Bond!

Publisher: EA Games
Developer: Eutechnyx
Price: £29.99
Players: 1-2
Out: Now

Away from the N64, Bond fans have never had it easy when it comes to games featuring their idol. Despite *The World Is Not Enough* being quite good, *007 Racing* sends the world's favourite secret agent tumbling back to into gaming obscurity. It's a mission-based car game in which Bond has to race against and do battle with some of the more memorable adversaries from the 19-film franchise. The best bit is that you get to do it in some of Q Branch's most spectacular vehicular creations, each armed to the spark plugs with king-of-the-road weaponry. It sounds delicious to the average Bond fan, but when you actually get into the game, the faults become all too apparent. ☐ **Ryan Butt**



Live and let drive. Sadly EA has wasted a fantastic licence with utterly shoddy gameplay.

PSone™

The game is a crude and messy scrapheap, the handling is appalling. Even the super-slow, two-player mode can't save this licence to kill.

03

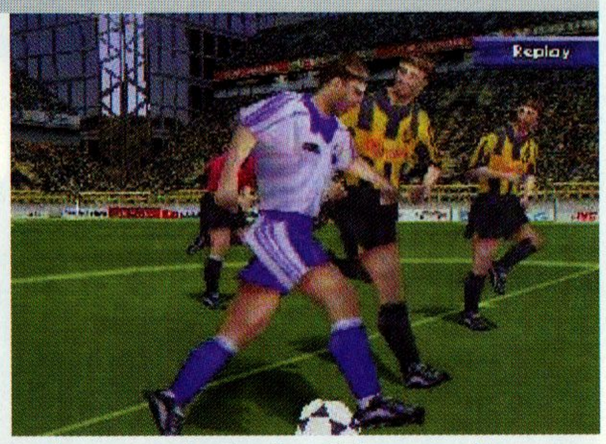
VERDICT

FIFA 2001

A summer in training camp well spent?

Publisher: EA Games
Developer: EA Sports
Price: £29.99
Players: 1-4
Out: Now

This year's *FIFA* game boasts the kind of updates you'd expect in a Panini sticker collection. All the latest kit designs are included, as are the most up-to-date team rosters and some neat new motion captures. Featuring over 50 international sides and clubs from 17 of the world's most exciting leagues, *FIFA 2001* looks like an inviting prospect for the armchair football fan. Don't be fooled, though, there is nothing stand-outish enough to make this an essential purchase. To be fair (as Peter Beardsley would say) the computer AI has been improved, making it much harder for your goalie to run upfield and punt one into the net, and the presentation remains the best in the business. ☐ **Ryan Butt**



Back once again. Another *FIFA*, more of the same old same old stuff. Roll on, *ISS Pro Evolution 2*.

PSone™

The true essence of football hasn't been harnessed. Come on, *FIFA*, bite the bullet and copy *ISS* – a winning formula that outclasses this offering.

06

VERDICT

ALSO RELEASED...

Furry multiplayer shenanigans in **CRASH BASH**... Puppy power for the pint-sized in **102 DALMATIANS**... Flying teacups aplenty in **ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2001**... Rancid bandages unravelled in **THE MUMMY**... Farty-breath and festive party-pooping in **THE GRINCH**... Simplistic kiddy platform action in **DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK** and men in spandex pants getting lubed up in **WCW BACKSTAGE ASSAULT**... For all the latest PSone news and demos, see **OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE**...

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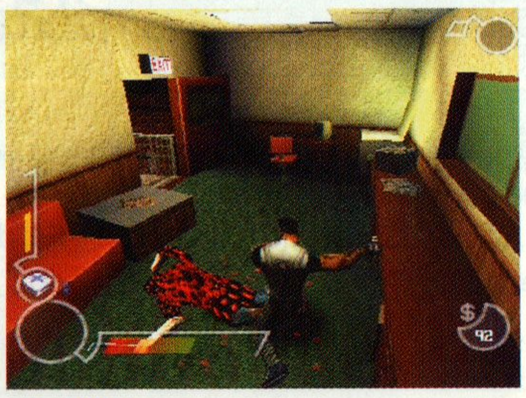
ROUNDUP



NEWS

POWER DIGGERZ

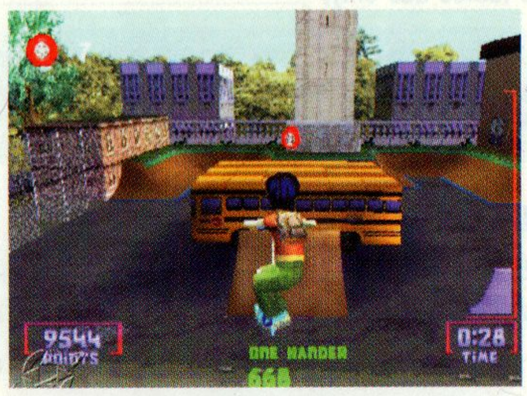
At last, a game that lets you shovel dirt from a pile on the deck to the back of a truck! It's the Japanese arcade game they couldn't help converting. *Power Diggerz* puts you in control of a JCB and begs you to make the earth move. After basic training you'll use a motionless digger before graduating to larger, mobile monsters and undertaking a bizarre string of tasks such as fishing turtles out of a swimming pool. Can you wait until April?



PREVIEW

BLADE

The cult classic movie starring Wesley Snipes gets a videogame makeover, and the results to date look promising indeed. As well as his super-smooth, unarmed combat techniques our hero, the half-vampire bloodsucker hunter Blade, carries a trademark steel cutter and can use a host of beefy weapons. The game is extremely dark, literally and in terms of atmosphere, and boasts some stomach-churning gore as the bodies pile up in a crimson mess. *Blade* is due in February.



SIX MONTHS AWAY

RAZOR FREESTYLE SCOOTER

Razor Scooters, the company heading the vogue for aluminium mini scooters, is releasing a PSone game in the *Tony Hawk's* mould. Crave Entertainment is developing the title, *Razor Freestyle Scooter*, which is rumoured to feature ten riders and 40 tricks. It's set for a springtime release in the UK, lest the fad for these miniature road menaces burns out by summer. Gamers can also expect a punk soundtrack.

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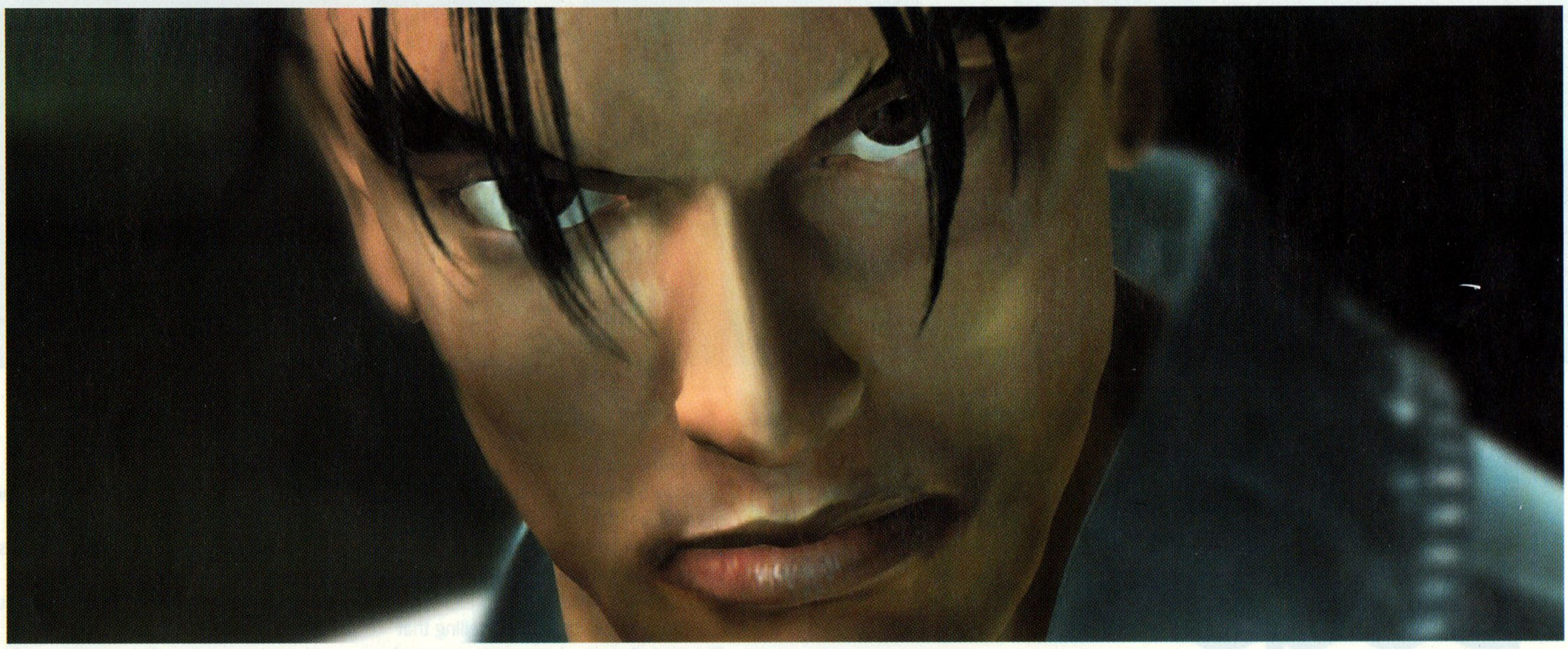
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Edited by: Sam Richards

media

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PS2 doesn't just play games, you know. Here's some other stuff you might like...

Text by: Sam Richards/Lee Hart/Ben Lawrence/Mike Goldsmith



"I think you'll see that my gun is indeed bigger than your gun..."

RESERVOIR DOGS

Momentum/£19.99/Out now

Film: An epochal movie that still stands up to repeated viewings, if only so you can relive Steve 'Mr Pink' Buscemi's rant against indiscriminate tipping, or freeze-frame the denouement to work out exactly who shot who first.

You probably don't need telling that *Reservoir Dogs* is about a mis-matched posse of hired crims on a bungled diamond heist. Tim 'Mr Orange' Roth spends the entirety of the film lying in a pool of blood, Michael 'Mr Blonde' Madsen chops off a cop's ear, and Tarantino's study in the 'aesthetic of violence' is complemented by stylish black suits and shades, while K-Billy's 'Sound Of The Seventies' plays in the background. Let's go to woik. **SR**

Features: Interview with Tarantino about how *RD* would never have been made without Harvey Keitel's intervention. A special box set is also available for £29.99 – the package includes a Tarantino biography and collectors' postcards.

Verdict: Great movie, but the paucity of features on the disc is disappointing. **8/10**



THE PATRIOT

Columbia TriStar/£19.99/8 January

Film: After the success of *Independence Day* and the failure of *Godzilla*, Roland Emmerich and Dean Devlin swapped sci-fi for history with this tale of the American War of Independence. Mel Gibson plays Benjamin Martin, an ex-soldier more interested in his farm than getting involved with the skirmish with the British. When his family is dragged into the conflict, he takes up his trusty tomahawk and leads the colonial rebellion against the Crown.

From the pen of Robert Rodat (*Saving Private Ryan*) *The Patriot* shares an irritating flaw with Spielberg's film: namely, far too much 'God bless America' flag-waving. As in *Ryan*, when it's time for battle the movie bursts spectacularly into life. Although Gibson's basically playing William Wallace again, he carries the film with impressive gravitas, ensuring *The Patriot* achieves at least some of the epic sweep and emotional power it's aiming for. **LH**

Features: Commentary from Emmerich and Devlin plus three featurettes.

Verdict: An inferior, Americanised version of *Braveheart* but still entertaining. **7/10**



28 DAYS

Columbia Tristar/£19.99/Out now

Film: You've read about the daily procession of B-list celebs into the Priory Clinic. Now watch a ludicrous rehab comedy/drama in which Sandra Bullock adopts a troubled, bad girl persona. Gasp as she goes on a pill-popping booze binge! Cringe as she dresses all in black and smokes cigarettes in an attempt to come across as 'a bit weird'! Frown as she confronts her demons through endless therapy sessions! Then smile as the girl-next-door Sandy we know and love is returned to us after the titular 28 days.

The painful combination of forced humour and pathos on show here completely wastes talented supporting players such as Steve Buscemi and Viggo Mortensen, while Bullock's own performance suggests she realised this was a turkey about three days into filming. **LH**

Features: An entertaining commentary, two featurettes and a bizarre 'How to make a gum wrapper chain' diagram.

Verdict: You'll be hitting the booze and pills yourself after sitting through this. **3/10**



THE PERFECT STORM

Warners/£19.99/Out now

Film: Sebastian Junger's true-story best-seller about the worst storm in recorded history is given the full Hollywood treatment. Wolfgang Petersen (*Das Boot*) is the man at the helm, while George Clooney and Mark Wahlberg are the captain and first-mate aboard the small fishing boat caught in the maelstrom.

The Perfect Storm takes far too long to get going, it's cloyingly over-sentimental, the characters are clichéd and it suffers from TV movie dialogue... but once the Andrea Gail puts out to sea and the weather turns biblical, the film overcomes all its faults and becomes a gripping fight for survival. Even though most viewers will already know the outcome of the story, *The Perfect Storm* still packs a hurricane-force emotional wallop. **LH**

Features: Includes two informative commentaries from director and author. A behind-the-scenes peek at the making of the film, a featurette where Gloucester residents relate their real-life experiences of the nightmare and a documentary which follows schmaltz-specialist James '*Titanic*' Horner as he scores the movie.

Verdict: Swallow those sea-sickness pills and get ready for a rough but rewarding journey. **8/10**



THE VIRGIN SUICIDES

Pathé/£19.99/Out now

Film: Sofia Coppola's infamous performance in *The Godfather Part III* may have nipped her acting career in the bud, but Francis Ford's little girl has made an impressive debut on the other side of the camera. *The Virgin Suicides* is a Seventies-style teen movie with a difference – it's *Dazed And Confused* with a strange, tragic twist.

The five Lisbon sisters are beautiful enough to mesmerise every adolescent boy in their suburban Michigan neighbourhood, but their inaccessible mystery is heightened when the youngest Lisbon, 13-year-old Cecilia, commits suicide by hurling herself out of her bedroom window and onto a spiked railing. Misadventure at the school homecoming dance results in a permanent grounding for the remaining sisters as the boys resort to espionage in an attempt to understand the alluring enigma of blossoming womanhood. Air's acclaimed original score mingles with pop hits of the era to create a lush musical accompaniment to this touching, beguiling film. **SR**

Features: The original theatrical trailer is all you get. Shame.

Verdict: A welcome addition to the teen movie canon. Worth seeking out. **7/10**

››ALSO RELEASED
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Event Horizon Paramount £19.99/**Frequency** Entertainment In Video £19.99



ELECTION

Paramount/£19.99/Out now

Film: Another excellent high school movie providing a witty antidote to the antics of the *American Pie* crowd. Matthew Broderick is superb as amiable teacher Jim McAllister whose well-meaning attempts to curb the ruthless ambition of school swot Tracey Flick (Reese Witherspoon) end in disaster. When Tracey looks like winning the election for student presidency by a landslide, Jim persuades nice-but-dim Paul Metzler to stand against her. Then, in an act strangely prescient of Republican election officials in Florida, he hides two of Tracey's votes, allowing Paul to claim victory. The subsequent scandal is mirrored by Jim's ill-considered affair, contributing to a blackly comic downfall. A brilliant subplot concerning Paul's lesbian riot grrl sister provides more meticulously observed humour. **SR**

Features: Amusing commentary by director Alexander Payne.

Verdict: Mid-life crisis beats teenage angst any day. **8/10**



THE NEXT BEST THING

Buena Vista/£19.99/Out now

Film: When Abbie (Madonna) and gay best friend Robert (Rupert Everett) get drunk one night and end up in bed together, they wake to find that – whoops! – they've only gone and made the beast with two backs and – even bigger whoops! – there's a baby on the way. But their friendship survives and when the child is born the unlikely couple raise him together, until their domestic bliss is ruined when Abbie falls for another man and a bitter custody battle ensues.

Real-life pals Madonna and Everett both deliver decent performances here. The former partially atones for crimes like *Who's That Girl?*, while the latter delivers his usual camp, sardonic routine before becoming all serious in the film's second half. However, it's *The Next Best Thing*'s episodic nature that ultimately proves to be its undoing. Beginning as an *Odd Couple* comedy before turning into a *Kramer Vs Kramer*-style courtroom drama, it doesn't generate enough laughs or tension to be considered anything more than a soap opera. **LH**

Features: The video of Madonna's irritating cover of Don McLean's irritating *American Pie*. Only slightly more interesting is a short series of interviews with the movie's cast and crew.

Verdict: Yet another poor entry on Madonna's film CV. Don't give up the day job, Madge. **3/10**



De Niro in *Angel Heart*, mean stare worn permanently as if to say: "You talkin' to me?"

TOP 10 DE NIRO DVDS

Mean Streets
Universal/£17.99
Film: This is the movie that put Director Martin Scorsese and stars Harvey Keitel and Robert De Niro on the map. Keitel excels as a small-time hood trying to escape the 'life' and De Niro is electrifying as his out-of-control friend.
Features: Picture gallery; Scorsese filmography; theatrical trailer.

Taxi Driver
Columbia Tristar/£19.99
Film: Scorsese's vision of hell-as-NYC seen through the eyes of crazy cabbie De Niro, is a thrilling, disturbing landmark in cinema.
Features: 70-minute making Of documentary; storyboard-to-film comparison; original screenplay; portrait gallery.

Raging Bull
MGM/£19.99
Film: The harrowing true story of the life and career of boxer Jake 'The Bronx Bull' La Motta. An unbearably powerful, surprisingly moving portrayal of a man at war with himself and a career pinnacle for everyone concerned.
Features: Making Of documentary; Jake's terrible jokes; Movietone news footage of a La Motta fight; photo gallery.

Angel Heart
Momentum/£19.99
Film: De Niro cameos as the mysterious Louis Cypher in this Gothic pot-boiler. Mickey Rourke gets beaten up, Lisa Bonet gets naked, and if that's not a recommendation we don't know what is.
Features: Commentary from director Alan Parker; behind-the-scenes footage; three featurettes.

Midnight Run
Columbia Tristar/£19.99
Film: A truly hilarious buddy movie. Charles Grodin is on career-best form as the Duke – an embezzling accountant on the run from the Mob and the cops – while De Niro proves he can do comedy as the grouchy bounty hunter trying to bring him in.
Features: None

Goodfellas
Warners/ £12.99
Film: The best gangster film since *The Godfather* burns up the screen with 145 minutes of Scorsese magic: songs, steadicam, swearing, violence, voice-over, and Bob as Jimmy the Gent, dangerous mentor to rising mobster Henry Hill.
Features: Production notes.

Casino
Columbia Tristar/£19.99
Film: It's *Goodfellas* in Las Vegas as Scorsese the Mafia's involvement in the gambling capital of the world. Bobby is on top, whiny form as the glorified accountant trying to keep both the Mob and his trophy wife, Sharon Stone, happy.
Features: Theatrical trailer; production notes.

Heat
Warners/£15.99
Film: The ultimate cops-and-robbers movie. De Niro and Pacino (sharing scenes for the first time) are flipsides of the same coin as thief and detective respectively, and the grandiose nature of the film is a perfect showcase for the two screen giants.
Features: None. Direction Michael Mann prefers to let his films speak for themselves.

Jackie Brown
Buena Vista/£12.99
Film: Tarantino's Blaxploitation influences are clear in his underrated adaptation of Elmore Leonard's Rum Punch. Pam Grier is the flight attendant playing all sides off against each other when she's caught trafficking hot money. Meanwhile Bob is amusingly crumpled and monosyllabic as a low-life crim.
Features: None. No-one loves talking about films more than Tarantino, so where are the features?

Analyze This
Warners/£19.99
Film: This comedy about a mobster (De Niro) sharing his problems with a psychiatrist (Billy Crystal) is pleasant enough but its style is severely cramped by one of the best TV series in years – the identically themed and infinitely superior *Sopranos*.
Features: Seven-minute outtake reel; commentary by De Niro and Crystal.

TEXT: LEE HART

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Out Jan. 2001

Gran Turismo 2000

Out Feb. 2001

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Gran Turismo 3
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Knockout Kings 2001
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Moto GP
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The World is Not Enough
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No doubt you'll be buying *GT3*. You'll be hearing a lot of these fellas, then.

PHOTO: TOM SHEEHAN

Feeder

How Polyphony Digital's favourite band connect *Buck Rogers* and *GT3*.

Back when Feeder appeared on the soundtrack to the original *Gran Turismo* in 1998, they were rookies among such exalted company as the Chemical Brothers, Ash and Garbage. Three years later, the steadily increasing popularity of the Welsh/Japanese trio has given them a leading role on *GT3*'s soundtrack with Ash and Death In Vegas now relegated to bit-players. The launch of the PS2's first great driving game is perfect timing for Feeder, who release their third album *Echo Park* in the spring. *GT3*'s soundtrack will include two tracks from this album as well as one exclusive new tune. The chaps at Polyphony Digital are obviously huge fans – their other recent creation, PSone's *Omega Boost*, was also propelled by Feeder's punchy rock melodies.

"I always thought that game soundtracks were the preserve of techno acts," explains frontman Grant Nicholas, "so it was nice when *Gran Turismo* opted for a few rock bands. In retrospect I can see why our music suited the game, it's got the right kind of exciting dynamics for a racing title."

The association with such a successful game hasn't done Feeder any harm at all. "We've picked up a few fans through *GT*. It's been good for our profile. Everyone knew the game was great, but I don't think anyone involved predicted quite how massive it was going to be."

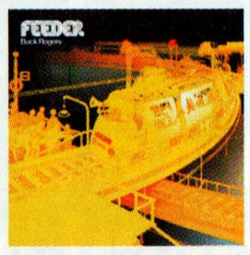
Feeder even got to be some of the first people outside Polyphony and SCEI to see *GT3* running when they were invited to the development studios during a Japanese tour in the summer. Nicholas was "very impressed" and the experience has fired his imagination. "I'd be interested in actually writing something specifically for a videogame. I haven't been asked yet but it would be exciting at some point to work alongside the animators or whatever, creating the right piece of music for a particular sequence in the same way as a composer approaches a film score."

Like any self-respecting rock group, Feeder have a PSone installed on their tour bus and hope to upgrade to a PS2 soon. "Taka [Hirose, bassist] and Jon [Lee, drummer] tend to play more games than me on tour," reveals Nicholas, with a hint of envy. "They're always on the console when I'm off doing the interviews and all the other hard work... but if the graphics are interesting, I can sit there and watch the other two play for hours."

Feeder's new single *Buck Rogers* has been on heavy radio rotation for weeks and is poised to become the band's biggest hit to date. "It's probably the most immediate song I've written. *Buck Rogers* is a silly working title that stuck – it seemed appropriate when we started messing around with spacey-sounding keyboards."

It appears that the retro-futuristic universe of Buck and his 25th Century companions proved an influence on the band throughout the recording sessions for *Echo Park*. "Perhaps more so visually than musically," concedes Nicholas. "The album artwork is all going to be illustrated along futuristic, psychedelic lines, like *Yellow Submarine* goes into space. I've never been massively into comics but I've always admired Japanese manga artwork. I'm hoping that one of our future videos can be a fully-animated affair."

Surely the only logical next step is Feeder: The Videogame. Keep 'em peeled. **Sam Richards**



Buck Rogers

Released on 8 January on two CDs and 7", Feeder's new single is a powerful melodic stomp, which hints at a more progressive edge to their traditional spiky punk rock sound. Grant Nicholas explains, "We're using a few electronic noises and samples, trying to make my guitar sound like a keyboard, stuff like that. We haven't gone dancey, but there's definitely a new wave flavour to the stuff you'll hear on the album." *Echo Park*, produced by Pixies/Foo Fighters knob-twiddler Gil Norton, will be Feeder's third proper album and is due for release some time in the spring.

**For more Feeder info visit www.feederweb.com*



URBAN75.COM

www.urban75.com/Punch

Ever wished you could reach through the television when faux-cockney chef Jamie Oliver was on, grab him by his oversized bottom lip and plunge his head deep into a bowl of scalding hot jalapeno pepper and clam chowder that he has knocked up using 'just what he happened to have lying around in his fridge'? You have? How terribly surprising. Then welcome to Urban 75. You can slap his face, along with a myriad of other non-entity celebs with the virtual punching machine. A better stress reliever than one of those squishy pink stress balls. Which is going some. **BL**



THE VIDEO GAME MUSEUM

www.vgmuseum.com

Museums have moved on since the days of traipsing past dusty glass cases and dozing curators. You can now visit them the from comfort of your own home via a phone line, and there are collections out there on subjects that really are interesting. The Video Game Museum is devoted to all matters arcade, console and home computer from the teak-effect slab that was the Atari 2600 through to current systems like the Game Boy and PSone. A busy site, packed with all the retro minutiae you'd expect an obsessive love of gaming to sire, this is the perfect place to settle arguments, laugh at the blunt state of yesteryear's cutting edge, or merely remind yourself how *Super Widget* on the SNES ends. Check out everything from a game's music to its ads plus read new reviews of old games it's all here. Well worth a gander. **BL**

THE TOP FIVE

The best WAP mobile phone/games pages.

1. www.wap.com
All you need to know about WAP technology.

2. www.chriscastle.com
Loads of WAP software to whet the appetite.

3. www.nokiagame.com
TV advertised. Play a game through SMS and the Web.

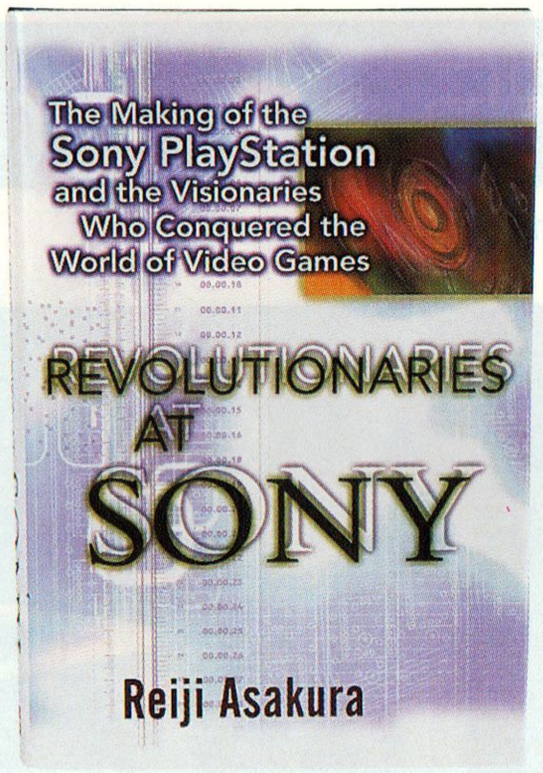
4. www.links2mobile.com
Full of links, some dull, most interesting.

5 www.wapdrive.com
Fancy info on free WAP sites? Go here.

»PRINT

REVOLUTIONARIES AT SONY

Author: Reiji Asakura/**Publisher:** McGraw-Hill/
Price: £12.99/**See:** www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk



The story of Sony's remarkable rise and rise through the videogames industry is one that's been told many times by magazines, often in misleadingly simple terms. The struggle of establishing the PlayStation as a major force in a field dominated by Nintendo and Sega (and already littered with lesser casualties) was primarily the burden of one creative visionary named Ken Kutaragi – without him, we would still all probably be playing the Saturn. It's a tale justifiably related in the language of suspense fiction by Reiji Asakura in *Revolutionaries At Sony*.

It's made clear that Kutaragi's success, from his early days in Sony's digital processing division to his current status as president and CEO of SCEI, has been achieved by applying a strong business model to technologically groundbreaking developments. Asakura's account manages to make each technological discovery and each sales objective achieved sound desperately exciting despite the dependence on jargon and industry speak. It's still hardly bedtime reading, but *Revolutionaries At Sony* is a fascinating insight into the PlayStation phenomenon with a whopping great 'To Be Continued...' legend on the final page. **SR**

Mags we like







TITLE

Frequency: Monthly/**Price:** ¥500 (import)/**See:** www.sub-title.net

You'll have to forgive us for choosing yet another obscurist Japanese mag, but this one is certainly on the money (Yen or otherwise). Although ostensibly a style mag (their sole English coverline reads: 'Read at your own risk') *Title* dedicates pages to the latest gadgets, DVDs and in this issue, the current trend for virtual models. Rather than the marketing-friendly likes of Ananova, the models here are worryingly real with their own vital statistics, interests etc – think the bizarro info provided by Namco for *Ridge Racer*'s Ai Fukami and Reiko Nagase and you're there. Interested parties should head to www.kcn.co.jp/~sts for more on cover star, Miyoko Yukawa. The implications for PS2 in Japan and eventually the rest of the world are huge.

Elsewhere, there's Hysteric Glamour fashion shoots, J-League footie, Evisu togs, blow-up dolls, body painting and an advert for Tissot watches featuring Michael Owen. "The watch I trust," apparently.

Gaming content: Minimal apart from the odd review, advert and screenshot – you'll want the equally-stylish (but bonkers) likes of *George* and *Lightning* for more. **MG**

**Title is available from good japanese import shops and some fashion outlets*

TEXT: SAM RICHARDS

»MUSIC



Dido: She's no angel, and not much of a songwriter either.

SLEEVENOTES (◎)

Using the power of your PS2 with this month's best CDs.

DIDO No Angel (Arista)

Who? Female singer-songwriter, sister of Rollo from Faithless and the voice sampled on Eminem's 'festive' smash, *Stan*.



Highlights: *Thankyou*, the one *Stan* stole, is a decent tune in its own right. Otherwise insipid acoustic angst is the order of the day.

Lowlights: Songs such as *Hunter* and *All You* are just a faltering footstep away from the corporate folk rock of The Corrs. Not a good thing.

Verdict: So bland it makes Morcheeba sound like NWA. Dido is much bigger in America than here right now, and frankly they can keep her. **3/10**

THE ORB Cydonia (Universal/Island)

Who? Now basically just original techno hippy 'Dr' Alex Paterson and a truckload of psycho-stimulants. *Cydonia* is The Orb's sixth album.



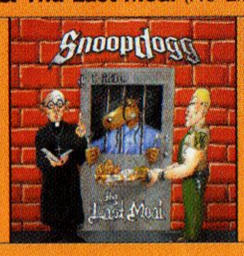
Highlights: *Thursday's Keeper* and the wackily-titled *A Mile Long Lump Of Lard* are diverting post-Aphex grinds.

Lowlights: *Promis* and *Hamlet Of Kings* are among the many trademark Orb moments here, being lengthy, dubby, trippy – and terribly tedious.

Verdict: Now countryside raves and fractals are considered distinctly passé, The Orb's music seems like a quaint irrelevance. **5/10**

SNOOP DOGG Tha Last Meal (No Limit/Priority)

Who? The frequently ridiculous G-funk gangsta rapper, now firmly ensconced at Master P's No Limit stable (see below).



Highlights: In a surprisingly tight and funky selection, *What's My Name Pt 2*, *Hennessy N Buddha* and *Back Up Off Me* are all seriously smooth.

Lowlights: Too many 'biiittches', too many crap skits and an album sleeve which looks like it's been drawn by Snoop himself. Blindfolded.

Verdict: Again proving there's life after Death Row, Snoop bites back with some of his best cuts in years. Lack of quality control lets him down near the end. **6/10**

KINGS OF CONVENIENCE Quiet Is The New Loud (Source)

Who? Geeky Norwegian duo whose debut album situates them on the front line of the new acoustic movement.



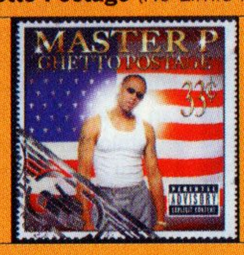
Highlights: Pitching somewhere between Badly Drawn Boy and Belle & Sebastian, the album is a rich, introspective delight from start to finish.

Lowlights: Party tunes not included. But then that's not what Kings Of Convenience came here for.

Verdict: Exactly the kind of music to offer solace during the winter hibernation, it's another winner from the commendably eclectic Source label. **8/10**

MASTER P Ghetto Postage (No Limit/Priority)

Who? Hip-hop mogul in the Puff Daddy mould, his New Orleans based No Limit label is America's hottest musical property right now.



Highlights: Lacking the distinctive drawl of someone like Snoop, P relies on ensemble cuts (*Roll How We Roll*) and lewd R&B (*Would You*).

Lowlights: Beats are dated for the most part and P raps with little charm, always at pains to remind us just how much money he's making from the whole shebang.

Verdict: The relentless self-aggrandising isn't justified given the unremarkable fare on offer. Master P should confine himself to the boardroom from now on. **4/10**

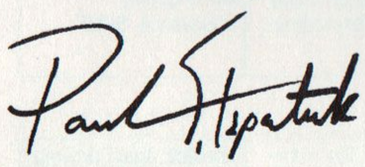
HARDCORE

Tips, tactics, tricks, cheats. Want to rip your new games to shreds? Welcome to the section that's strictly for the HardCore...



I lead a thrilling life. If I'm not becoming filthy rich building the world's greatest theme parks, I'm surfing the oceans in a shark costume looking for the Big One. And if my diary will allow, I like to round off my day with a relaxing sesh as a professional ice hockey player. It's all in the wrists.

Fair cop. It's all lies. I am (as ever) staplegunned to my desk, with a PS2 and a tower of game discs blocking out the lone, bare 15-watt light bulb. I glance at the mould-coated wall clock. It's only 3am. Great. Six more hours to find the strategies and codes you thirst for. This month you can check out our office-designed *TimeSplitters* levels. Then you can get the lowdown on *Theme Park World*, some sly tips on *Dynasty Warriors 2* and a heap of codes for *Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2*. And finally there's our new Q&A section for your most pressing PS2-related questions. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to grab some sleep while *Moto GP*'s loading...



Paul Fitzpatrick
Staff Writer

HELP ME!

The world of Hardcore can be a lonely place, with now't but a broken Dual Shock 2 for company. What I'm saying is send me those tips. Send me your guides, your problems, your requests and your sneakiest cheats. We'll print the best (and bung you a T-shirt), and run our answers to your problems in a new Q&A column. Write to me at: **Hardcore, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.** Electrical cyberpost to **PS2@futurenet.co.uk**. Write me!

TIMESPLITTERS

Get creative with your frag fests and make your own *TimeSplitters* levels. We did.

DEATH A LA CARTE

As if bombing around time killing alien slime wasn't fun enough, those nice people at Free Radical Design have stuffed an easy-to-master Mapmaker option into the *TimeSplitters* game disc. Just for the hell of it. If you are easily put off by the edutainment potential of building your own Deathmatch arenas, fear not! It's a piece of the proverbial. And to show you just how easy it is, here's a basic three-step guide to making your own personal hell hole.

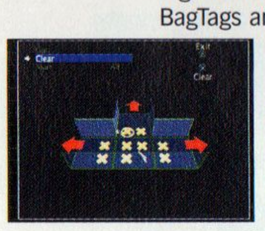
1. Design your arena

Boot up the game. Select Arcade and toggle through arenas until you get to MapMaker. Once in, use the left analogue stick with the action buttons to move the cursor around the green grid, placing room and corridor shapes in a design that does it for you. Remember to make sure that exit points (shaded in red) join up between sections. There are a number of twin-level building blocks available, the simplest being the stairway. Once you place one of these on the grid, use the left shoulder buttons to move up or down a level to where the block's higher or lower exit point emerges. This way, you can build maps that span over seven storeys. If you're in any doubt about whether design connects up, or just want to see how your arena feels from an in-game perspective, press SELECT, then choose Preview Map and you'll be plonked in the middle of your level. You can do this at any stage.



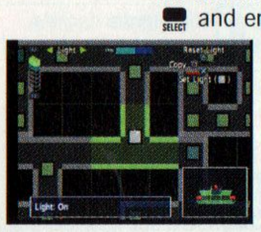
2. Place items in your arena

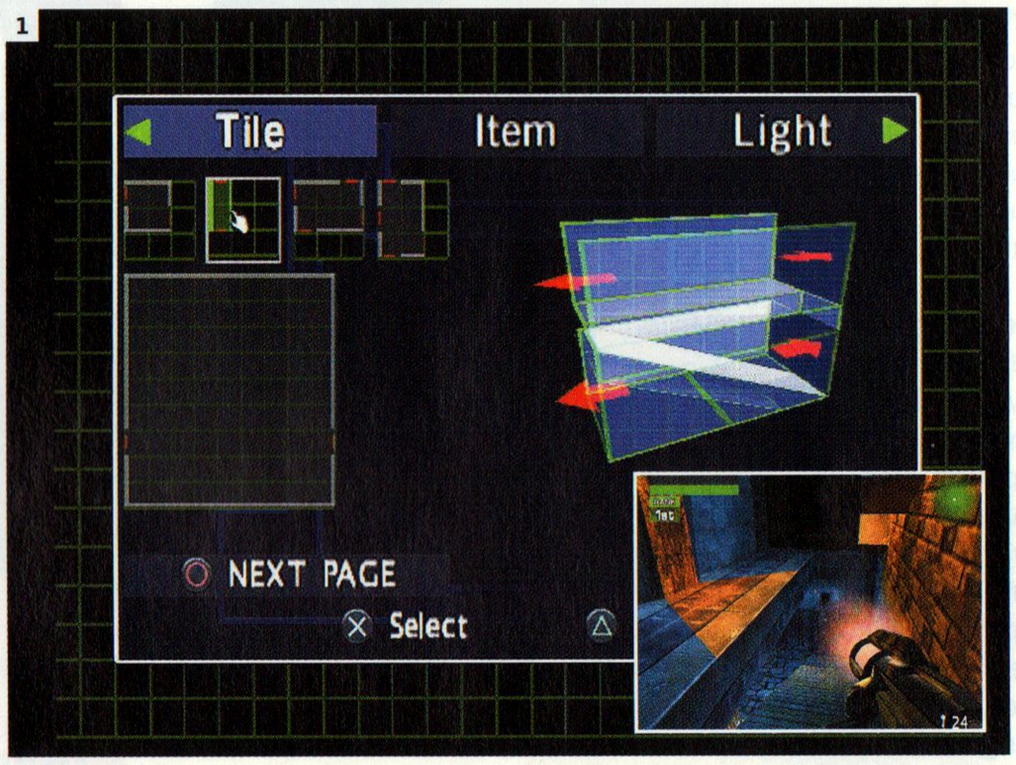
Every building block has several points in it where weapons, medikits and people can appear and regenerate during Deathmatches, BagTags and so on. Selecting the item sub-menu using the D-pad and pressing ⊗ over a particular room will bring up these points and enable you to fill your arena with all sorts of hardware and fleshware.

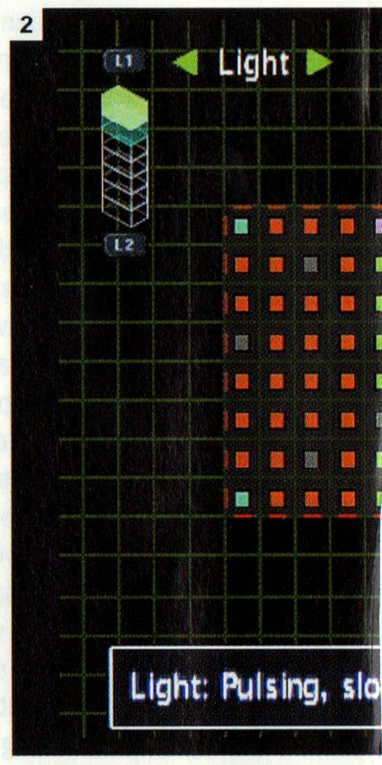


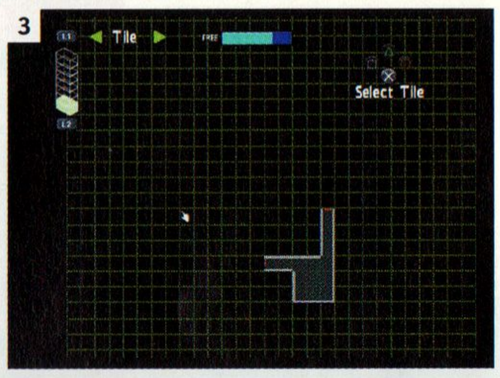
3. Add the finishing touches

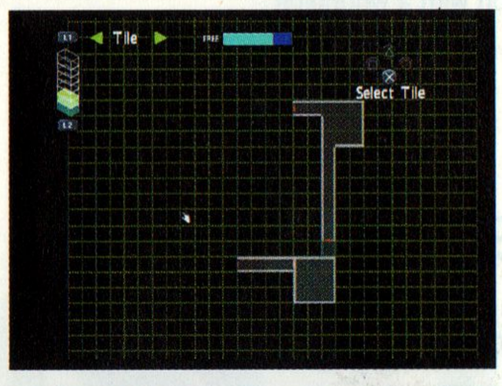
Even a frag fest can be let down by bad lighting, so make sure your arena isn't let down by a lack of ambience. Using the Lighting sub-menu (again accessed with the D-pad) you can select the colour and intensity of the individual sections of your design. You can also make lights flicker or pulse, or even plunge a section into impenetrable darkness. All that remains is to select an overall level theme by pressing SELECT and entering 'Map Settings'. You'll be surprised how different the same arena can look with an Alien or a Gothic makeover. Save the finished masterpiece and challenge your mates. Simple.

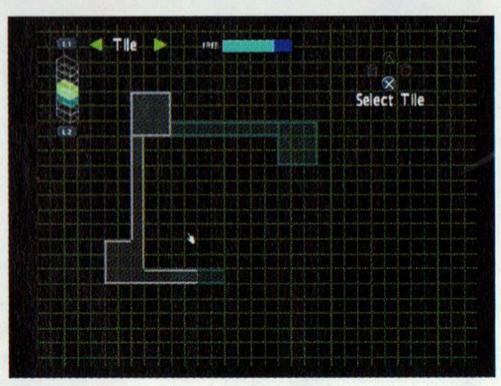


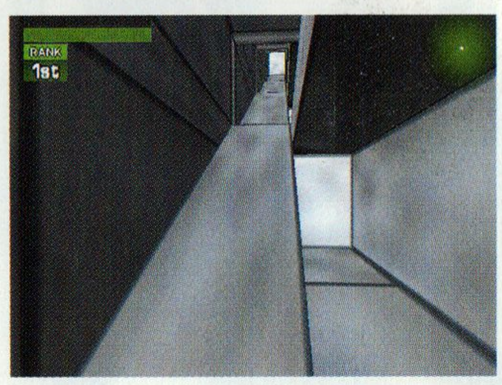


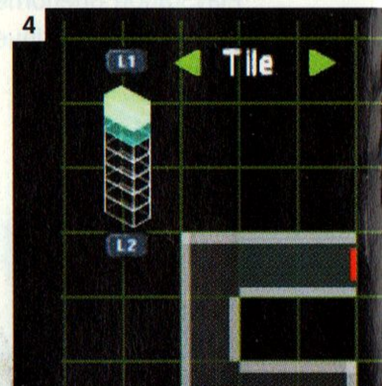












HERE ARE FOUR WE MADE EARLIER

And to show you how easy it is, here are four levels that we've designed for *OPS2*'s inter-office Deathmatches. Let the carnage begin...

1. The Tower

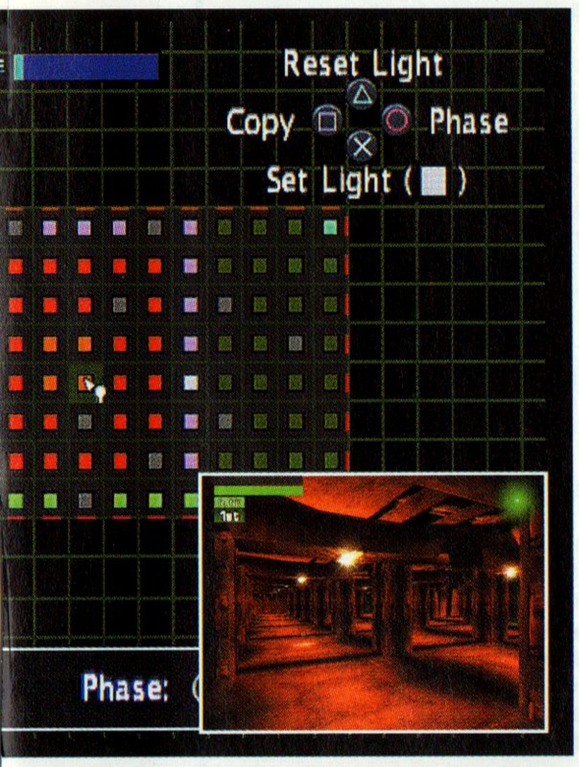
Building Notes: Very simple. Just build a tower out of stairways, place team starting points on the top and bottom floors and just a couple of weapons on the middle floor.
Lighting Notes: This level is all about speed, so atmospheric lighting is optional.
Advantages: Plenty of angles in a small area and quite mad if more than two people play.
Best Theme: Gothic

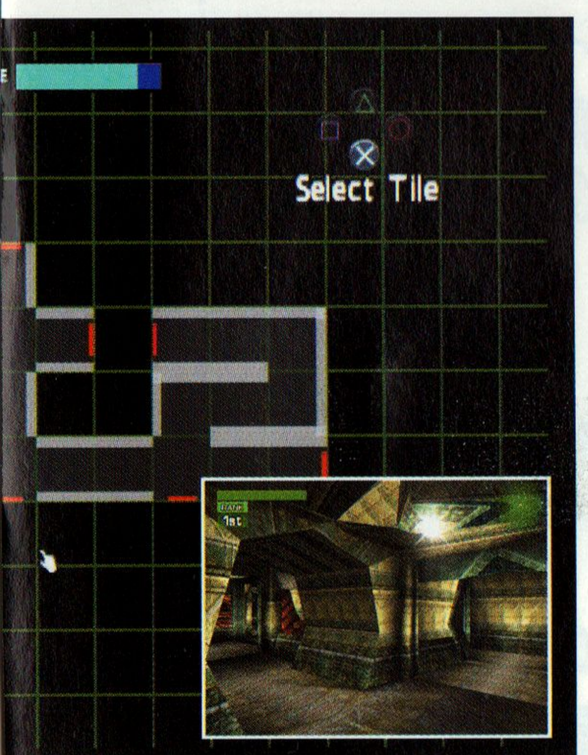
2. The Chamber

Building Notes: Using the smallest block (with no walls) build as large a room as the MapMaker's memory will allow. Place team starting points at each corner of the chamber and a heinous pile of weapons in the very centre.
Lighting Notes: Highlight the weapons stockpile and fill the rest of the chamber with rings of maddening, flickering lights. The occasional pitch-black square adds a disorientating touch.
Advantages: With its mass of pillars but no real hiding places this a fantastic place for mad Deathmatch with your mates.
Best Theme: Industrial gives the Chamber a perfect, dingy underground-car-park look.

3. The Escher

Building Notes: Start with a large room with a raised platform and two exits. Build a stairway up and a short connecting corridor to another identical room. Repeat until you have four rooms (each on a higher floor than the last) forming the corners of a large square. Connect the highest room to the lowest with a long stairway back down to complete the square. Place starting points on the platforms in each room and a sprinkling of weapons in the connecting corridors. It may not mess with the third dimension but it will mess with your Deathmatch opponents' minds.
Lighting Notes: Colour-code the rooms for each team but keep everything bright.
Advantages: You have to race to find the biggest weapons, and your opponents can come from any direction. Great for one player vs bots as well.
Best Theme: Virtual's spooky, bare walls make the most of the weirdly looping chambers.





4. Vanity
Building Notes: As hard or easy as you want. Basically build a level that spells out your name, ('Fitz' in this case), or any word that comes to mind. Work on several levels and you can create twisting arenas out of phrases/taunts, and so on.
Lighting Notes: Totally up to you.
Advantages: Lots of dead-ends and looping corridors. Deathmatch-friendly *and* educational as well! Who said videogames never teach you nuffink?
Best Theme: Hmm. Is 'Scumwad' Industrial or Gothic?

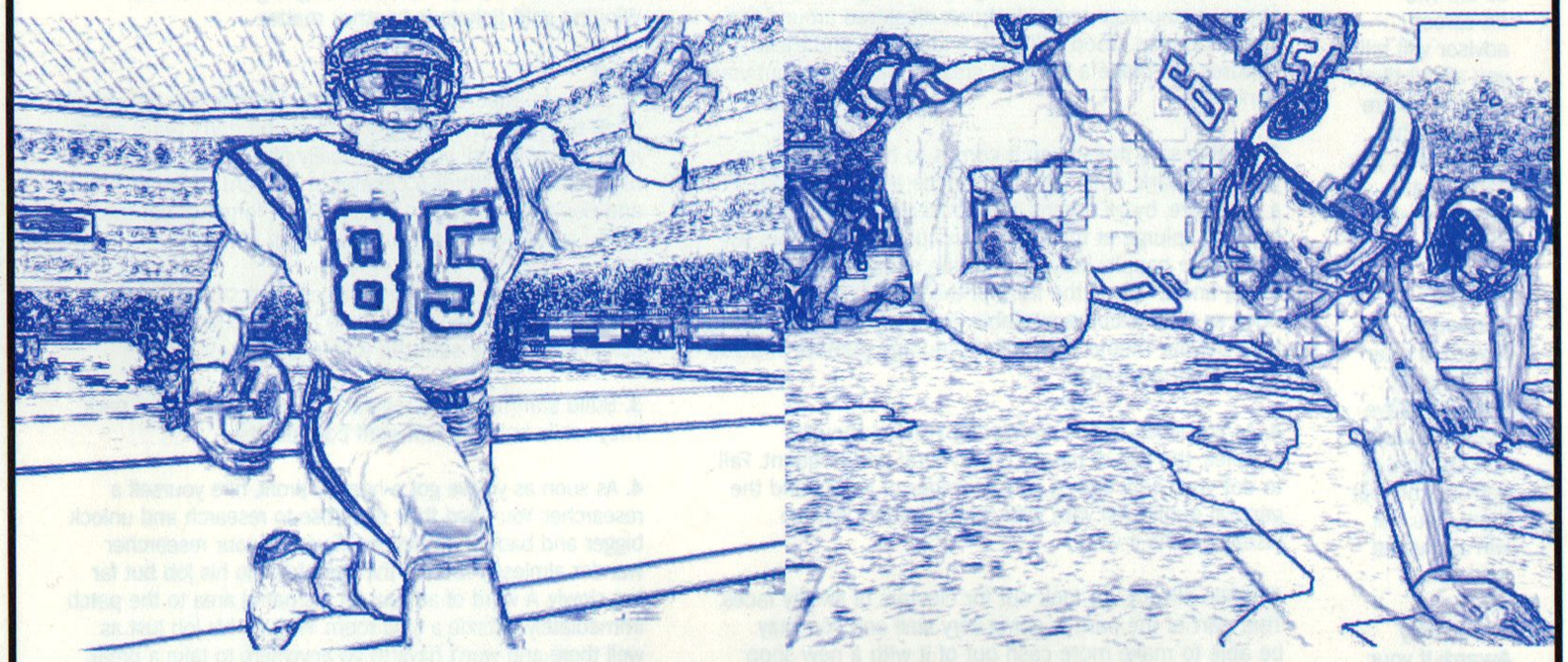
TIME-SPLITTERS

There is a small loophole in *TimeSplitters* that enables you to indulge in some great (and unfair) enemy-bagging. Choose the Arcade Level and choose the Custom 1 weapon set (in other words, no weapons selected). Then select the 'Start with weapon' option. When you enter the game, your CPU adversaries will not be able to move, enabling you to take them out with 100% accuracy.

MADDEN 2001

TEAM CHEAT CODES

Go to the Options Menu, select Secrets, then enter the codes below to unlock the various teams for all the gridiron madness under the sun.



Team	Code
All 49ers	Goldniners
All Bears	Brownbears
All Bills	Bluebills
All Broncos	Buckingbroncos
All Chargers	Bluechargerst
All Chiefs	Redchiefs
All Colts	Whitecolts
All Cowboys	Bluecowboys
All Dolphins	Aquafins
All Eagles	Greeneagles
All Falcons	Blackfalcons
All Giants	Biggiants
All Jets	Greenjets
All Lions	Silverlions
All Packers	Yellowpacks
All Panthers	Bigcats
All Patriots	Redpats
All Raiders	Silverraids
All Rams	Goldramst
All Redskins	Redindianst
All Saints	Marchingins
All Steelers	Blacksteels
All Vikings	Conquerd
Mummies team	Kingtut
1957 49ers team	Goldrush
1957 Lions team	Lionpower
1958 Colts team	Stables
1958 Giants team	Jollygreen
1962 Oilers team	Therewasaman
1962 Texans team	Getem
1966 Chiefs team	Megiveyou
1966 Cowboys team	Whoshotjr
1966 Packers team	Champs
1967 Cowboys team	Tundra
1967 Packers team	Snowplow
1967 Rams team	Blitzer
1968 Colts team	Shocker
1968 Raiders team	Heidi

Team	Code
1968 Jets team	Tvtimeout
1969 Chiefs team	Nofluke
1970 Browns team	Mnf
1970 Vikings	Peopleeater
1971 Chiefs team	Overtime
1972 Colts team	Airshow
1972 Dolphins team	Perfect
1972 Steelers team	Lucky
1974 Steelers team	Steelcurtain
1975 Cowboys team	Hailmary
1975 Vikings team	Purple
1978 Chargers team	Roller
1978 Oilers team	Earl
1978 Raiders team	Holy
1978 Steelers team	Dynasty
1979 Cowboys team	Comeback
1979 Bucaneers	Pirates
1981 49ers team	Thecatch
1981 Bengals team	Tigers
1981 Chargers team	Ironman
1981 Cowboys team	Nochance
1984 All-Madden team	Madden84
1984 Dolphins team	Dantheman
1985 Bears team	Upset
1985 Falcons team	Flyaway
1985 Patriots team	Blowout
1986 All-Madden team	86madden
1986 Broncos team	Thedrive
1988 All-Madden team	Madden88
1989 Broncos team	Crushed
1990 All-Madden team	90madden
1990 Bills team	Wideright
1991 Falcons team	Neonlights
1992 All-Madden team	Madden92
1992 Bills team	Comebackkid
1993 Bills team	Notagain
1994 All-Madden team	94madden
1994 Chargers team	Charge
1996 All-Madden team	Madden96
1996 Packers team	Almost
1996 Panthers team	Defense

Team	Code
1998 49ers team	Thecatchtwo
1998 All-Madden team	98madden
1998 Packers team	Noluck
1998 Vikings team	Missedchance
EA Sports team	Inthegame
1969 Vikings	Allflukea
1970 Jets	Damnyankeest
1971 Cowboys	Starsa
1971 Dolphins	Longestgame
1972 Raiders	Sourd
1973 Bengals	Junglecats
1974 Dolphins	Defenderst
1974 Raiders	Struggles
1974 Vikings	Tarka
1975 Steelers	Miracleleapa
1977 Colts	Ghosttothepost
1977 Raiders	Theghosts
1978 Dolphins	Cannedtuna
1983 Raiders	Homesick
1985 All Madden Team	Mad1985
1987 All Madden Team	1987mad
1988 Bengals	Nohopea
1989 All Madden Team	Mad1989
1990 Raiders	Oneeyed
1991 All Madden Team	1991mad
1991 Lions	Toomuch
1992 Cowboys	Howboutem
1993 All Madden Team	Mad1993
1994 49ers	Bythebays
1994 Broncos	Oucha
1995 All Madden Team	1995madn
1997 All Madden Team	Mad1997
1999 All Madden Team	1999mad
1999 Rams	Nowhereman
1999 Titans	Miracleplays
1960 Eagles	Greenwingst
1977 Cowboys	Usateam

THEME PARK WORLD

Life's not fair, but it can be a theme park. If you've recently entered the leisure industry via PS2, you may want to check out the hints and tips below. And there's no queue!

HIDDEN AWARDS

Gold tickets

If you're going to progress in *Theme Park World*, you need gold tickets. During the game there are certain landmarks that will win you them: attendance increase, profit increase and so on. The on-screen advisor will tell you about these. However, there are five other awards that you can win at any time, and they are:

1. Path Economy Award: If after building ten rides you have used less than 100 squares of path to connect them, you will win a coveted gold ticket.

2. Security Award: If your security cameras can 'see' at least 80% of your park then it's gold-ticket time again. Tip: Try to win this at the start of the game when your park is tiny. It's much harder to do with a sprawling park.

3. Eco Award: Build at least five shops and have a litter bin within one square of each.

4. Upgrade Award: Nab yourself another gold ticket by upgrading all the rides in your theme park.

GENERAL TIPS

Park layout

1. Think about the initial layout of your park. Visitors in the game are as reluctant to trek long distances as the real people, so it's worth laying out your paths in a way that lets them get around with the minimum effort. A good way to do this is to have paths branching out from a large, central boulevard connected to the main entrance. At the end of the paths you can place hubs, around which you'll be able to position large rides and all-important shops and food outlets. This general template also allows for the maximum expansion without having to knock down attractions you've already built.

2. Punters are always happy and excited when they walk into your park. Bless their cotton socks, they just can't help it. This is worth exploiting by building a slew of shops, restaurants and sideshows clustered around the main entrance. Good will goes a long way, and these features will make a fast and great profit throughout your park's life.

3. Having said that, when it comes to building rides in your new park, don't fill the entrance area with them. Put a few there, by all means, but concentrate your first building splurge at the back of the park. The visitors will walk there happily (buying from the shops you laid en route) and it leaves the front of the park clear for new rides as they become available. Having old rides at the front of your theme park will discourage punters and you don't want to do that.

4. As you'll see by the wandering visitors' thought bubbles, the call of nature is very loud and frequent. Fail to dot your park with a good number of toilets and the general public *will* vote with their bladders and go elsewhere. As it were.

5. While playing, do look out for clusters of smiley faces. That part of the park is doing very well and you may be able to make more cash out of it with a new shop or sideshow.

6. Don't build toilets near food stands and restaurants. You may not be able to tell but even the clean ones hum, and that could affect your food sales disastrously.

Rides

1. Try to place shops and food outlets very close to ride exits. Riders are usually in a good mood when they re-emerge after three minutes of getting flung every which way on your latest attraction.

2. Keep a good flow of visitors by increasing the length of queuing areas to more than one square and reducing the duration of the ride. People prefer to ride frequently for less time than wait for ages for a longer go.

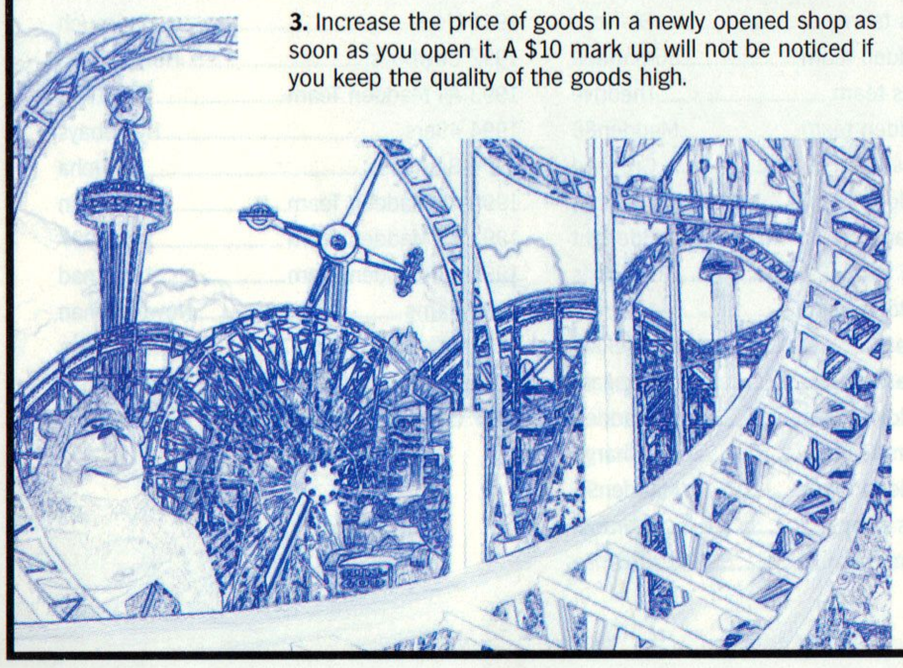
3. Get your park up and running before you build a roller coaster. They are expensive and take a while to plan and get right, so you don't want to be worried about impatient punters while you're knee-deep in girders and pylons.

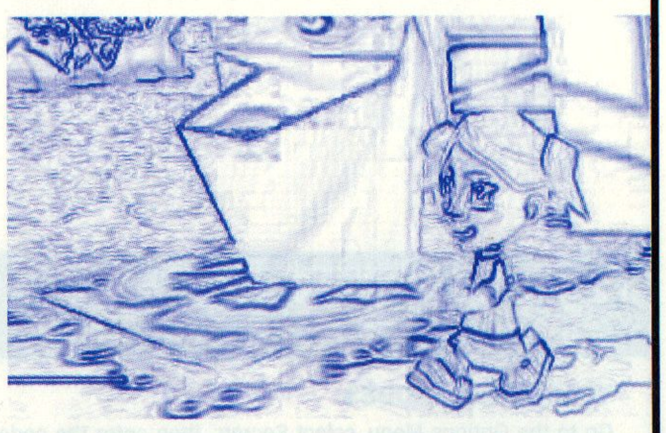
Money

1. Before you open your park, increase the entrance fee to between $60 and $70. Punters will pay this, and if you make the most of your profit and create a world-beating park they'll pay over $300!

2. Assuming you haven't been too greedy with your admission-price fixing, you'll probably get more than one email stating that the public think you're charging them too little! Well the public is always right, so increase the price. Anything up to $15 will go by without complaint.

3. Increase the price of goods in a newly opened shop as soon as you open it. A $10 mark up will not be noticed if you keep the quality of the goods high.





4. Don't get loans out unless your park is about to close. It's possible to play without ever going into the red. Winning gold tickets is another matter.

Staff

1. Staff are important, but don't go hiring-crazy before you open the park. They are pricey and you don't really need a lot of them until your park really fills up and out. Hire a mechanic and either a cleaner or a guard to begin with and don't bother training them. Don't forget to set their patrol areas so you get them working efficiently.

2. As your theme park gets busier, think about hiring entertainers to keep the people queuing happy and more cleaners to make sure the toilets don't hum.

3. Build staff rooms at regular intervals around the park. They really help prevent staff complaints.

4. As soon as you've got a healthy profit, hire yourself a researcher. You need their expertise to research and unlock bigger and badder attractions. If you let your researcher wander aimlessly around the park, he'll do his job but far too slowly. A word of advice: set his patrol area to the patch immediately outside a staff room. He'll do his job just as well there and won't have to go anywhere to take a break. Training your researcher will also make him more efficient.

SHOP MANAGEMENT: THE TRUTH

There are two routes to successful shops: satisfied customers or profit. Here are the settings to achieve either with the available shops.

DRINK SHOP

Happy punters	Profit
Price: $35	Price: $45
Quality: Good	Quality: Bad
Amount of ice: None	Amount of ice: High

BURGER SHOP

Happy punters	Profit
Price: $35	Price: $45
Quality: Good	Quality: Bad
Amount of fat: None	Amount of fat: Mid to high

FRIES SHOP

Happy punters	Profit
Price: $35	Price: $45
Quality: Good	Quality: Bad
Amount of salt: Heart-stopping	Amount of salt: Low

ICE CREAM SHOP

Happy punters	Profit
Price: $35	Price: $45
Quality: Good	Quality: Bad
Amount of sugar: Teeth-rotting	Amount of sugar: Low

RESTAURANT

Happy punters	Profit
Price: $42	Price: $55
Quality: Good	Quality: Medium

BALLOON SHOP

Happy punters	Profit
Price: $42	Price: $55
Quality: Good	Quality: Medium

COSTUME SHOP

Happy punters	Profit
Price: $55	Price: $65
Quality: Good	Quality: Medium

GIFT SHOP

Happy punters	Profit
Price: $67	Price: $75
Quality: Good	Quality: Medium

NHL 2001

Getting cranky with a big stick (on ice skates) is a great way to chill. But getting cranky with a big stick on ice with an unfair advantage is so much more fun. Follow these instructions to get yourself three key players with enhanced stats.

Super Forward

Create a player with the name 'Jaromir Jagr' or 'Peter Forsberg' in the Create A Player section and confirm his ratings. You can then adjust them if you want to, or change the player's name, but leave other settings as they are.

Super Defenseman

Similar to the above, but this time create a player with the name 'Sandis Ozolinsh' or 'Chris Pronger'.

Super Goalie

Again. Create a new player with one of the following names: 'Patrick Roy', 'Dominik Hasek' or 'Ed Belfour'. All real-world greats in the art of net-hurtling puck denial curiously enough. Confirm ratings and you're there.

Announcer calls

Manipulate the in-game announcer by inputting the following two names in the 'create a player' section. (Don't forget to save the settings.)

Name your player 'Bruce Willis' and the announcer will refer to him as 'The Dude'.

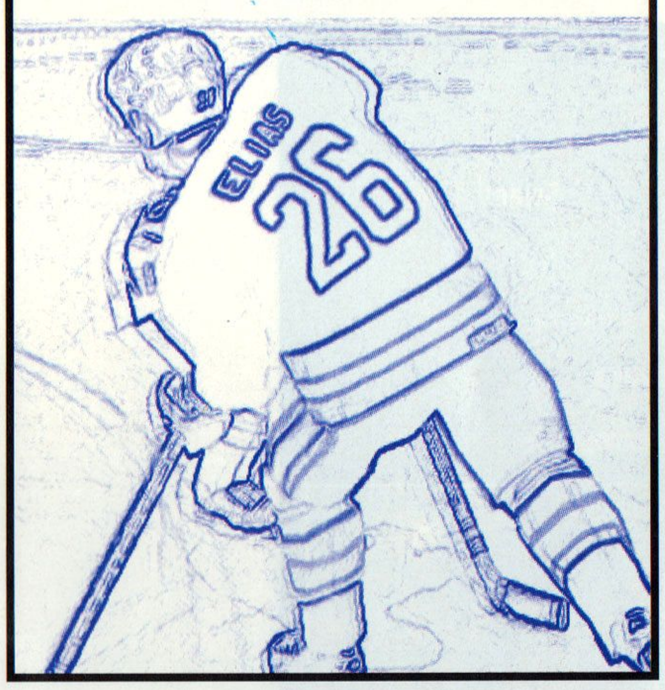
Name your player 'Hammer' and the announcer will call him 'The Hammer". Do let us know if you find any others!

Taunts

Press and hold △ after a goal or a win to taunt the other players.

Shorter penalty time

In any hockey game, tempers might fray, harsh words will be exchanged and punches should be thrown. Minimise the amount of time you have to spend sitting in the sin bin by following the teachings of Mohandas Gandhi and practising non-violent protest. Sure, laying out your opponent may *seem* more satisfying but resist. Summon your willpower and during a fight, let the other person punch you out without clocking him back. The opponent will get a five-minute penalty, while you get only a two-minute penalty.



SKY SURFER

As if plummeting thousands of feet with a plank of wood strapped to your feet isn't challenging enough, there are a number of trick moves you can perform. *Sky Surfer* crept onto the shelves while we were finishing off the issue, we'll have a full review for next month. If however you've bought a copy here are a few tips too help you do those tough stunts.

Trick moves listing

Scorpion	○, △, ✕
Menhouse Surprise	□, △, ✕
Opening Touring Car	□, □, □, ○
The Plate	△, ✕, △, ✕
Tidy Bowel In The Hole	□, ✕, ○, ✕
Bending Reed	△, □, ✕, ○
Propeller	□, △, ✕, ○
Free Fall	△, ✕, ✕, △
Burner Speed	○, ○, ○, □
Snow Ball	△, □, □, ○
Avalanche	△, ○, ○, □
Rolling Barrel Left	✕, ○, ○, ✕
Rolling Barrel Right	✕, □, □, ✕

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

Waist-high in the rampaging enemy army? Need help? Shin up a tree and read these helpful game tips before you continue the good fight.



Advancing quickly
This game is all about morale. As you advance ahead of your troops you will come across small, five-man units of enemy soldiers. It's a waste of time to kill all of them. Take out the leader of the unit (he'll usually be wearing armour and be at the head of his men). Once you've done that you can leave the remaining, leaderless warriors for your escort to polish up.

Archers
Drinking Archers will give you a mad headache. Listening to *The Archers* on Radio 4 will reduce your credibility to zero. Fighting archers in *Dynasty Warriors 2* is a sure-fire way to have your well-planned attack broken up before the enemy ground troops plough in. Always approach archers from an angle. Don't storm at them head-on, unless there are no other enemy soldiers between you and them. Despite their position above you, archers on walls are not as deadly as their ground-based brethren. Neutralising them is simple. Find the officer commanding the troops guarding the gateway. Kill him and move through the gates, up the steps and take the surprised archers at close range. Archers in towers are trickier. In this instance you have no option but to shoot them down with your own bow and arrow.

Horses
If you want to get ahead, get a horse. Saddle up and you'll not only be faster and more lethal with your weapon, but you'll also be impervious to ground attacks and you can take out enemies just by ploughing through them on your steed. Be aware, you won't get credit for killing the opposition this way. It's also worth noting that your horse will just as happily trample your own men under hoof as it will the opposing army's. To this end, the best way to fight on horseback is to gallop ahead and lure a group of enemy soldiers into the open. Then circle them with your nag and slice away at the soldiers at the edge of the group and whittle them down this way without risking your own men.

Protect your allies.
Protect your fellow generals and you'll keep the morale of your troops up and give you a better chance of defeating the enemy. Losing allied generals will have a bad knock-on effect, so if you see one struggling against an enemy general it is worth dropping everything and helping your comrade in arms.

How to kill enemy generals
1. All-out assault. If you have enough attack power a full frontal assault on the general's surrounding troops will work, but stick to normal attacks since Charge and Musou attacks do not have the necessary, sustained oomph to get you through.

2. If your energy is flagging take out a couple of the general's escorts. When defeated, they tend to drop a health bonus of +50.

3. Try to avoid attacks that knock down the enemy general. While down, they begin to heal themselves. To avoid this, try to stick to attacking moves that will whittle down his energy without flooring him. Some of the Musou attacks have combo strings without knock-down elements until their final stage and the first three of any Normal attacks will not knock the enemy off his pins.

4. Your opposing general only has a finite number of health-recharging moments, so with enough brute strength you can keep knocking him down until he's all spent and at your mercy.

5. Some strategy is required to get the better of later, harder generals. Let these tougher opponents attack, block and then counter attack while he's charging up a new attack.

6. If you've got a horse you have a good advantage over an enemy general. Stay on the steed, strafing the enemy until his energy is down low. Only then, dismount and finish him off.

7. Use your escorts. Knock down the general, move away from the action and approach from the rear. With a bit of luck, your escorts will take up the fight and while the general is busy keeping them at bay you can cut him down from behind.

8. Later generals can be nigh-on impossible to bring down by conventional means if your warrior is weaker than them. A good way to redress the balance is to attack with a Musou Arrow Barrage.

Permanent power-ups
Every 'named' warrior in the opposing army will leave behind a permanent power-up once defeated in battle. These will enhance your warrior's statistics and build his character. Although this may be of limited, immediate importance, the more rounded your general's skills, the better his survival chances in later stages. So seek out commanding officers in the enemy army, even if it means retracing some of your steps.

Save
You'll be given the opportunity to save your character details and statistics after each stage. It's worth doing for the obvious reason of being able to continue the same campaign. But it's also worth doing because once saved, your character's hard-earned statistics will be active even if you start a new game with that character. Strategic saves mean that, over time, you can build up formidable warriors that will be able to slice through the enemy like a knife through bean curd.

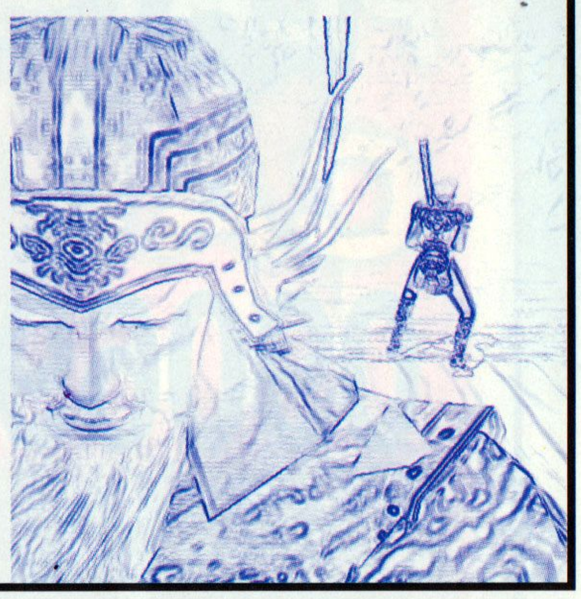
Desperate measures
(Or what to do when in a real bind...)
1. If your energy is flagging badly and you need food, don't be too proud to move back behind the front line and look for beaten enemy soldiers. Once hit eight or more times, a soldier will drop either a weapon item or some tasty Nikuman – that's meat buns to the rest of us. Failing that, about one in four of the white pots will give up yet more meaty-bun goodness if you break them. Also, as mentioned previously, an enemy general's escorts will give up +50 health points once defeated.

2. Remember, if it's all getting too much you can adjust the difficulty level. You won't be penalised for doing so.

3. Use the above tips to hit enemy generals as soon as you can. It's all about morale again. Wipe out the opposition's leaders and his troops will be much less effective and self-assured.

4. Check out the Pause Map and Stage Overview Map to spot where your troops are having a tough time. Move to those areas and help out to improve morale and your overall chances.

5. If you can't get beyond a certain stage, save your statistics and start a new game with the same character. You'll be able to increase your character's stats and build him up on the easier levels so that when you get to the harder stages you'll have the necessary power-ups and weapons to sail through.



SURFING H30

Unlock the shark surfer

Sharks attack surfers sometimes because the silhouettes of their boards look fish-like and fleshy. Well, it's time to take back the sea, dammit! To show you have no fear, and play the game as a shark surfer all you have to do is score 300 points on every level.



READY TO RUMBLE: ROUND 2

By fair means or foul. How to unlock all the boxers in Midway's fist-furious gem.

TO UNLOCK:

GC Thunder
Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode three times.

Wild 'Stubby' Corley
Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode four times.

Shaquille O'Neal
Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode five times.

Freedom Brock
Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode six times.

Rocket Samchay
Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode seven times.

Robox Rese-4
Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode eight times.

The President
Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode nine times to unlock a fighter who bears absolutely no resemblance whatsoever to any silver-haired, outgoing leader of the free world.

The First Lady
Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode ten times to unlock a fighter who bears absolutely no resemblance to The President's wife. Or any recently elected New York Senator, for that matter.

Rumble Man
Unlock the First Lady, then complete the game in Arcade mode under the Hard difficulty setting to unlock the ring master himself, Michael Buffer.

If that's too much like hard work though, input codes on the Character Select Screen to unlock these other characters. A sound will confirm correct entry:

Freak E Deke and Michael Jackson
Press R1 x13, R2, R1 x10, R2. The sound of the bell will confirm correct code entry. Alternately, complete the game successfully once in Arcade mode to unlock Freak E Deke and twice to unlock the King of Pop.

Thin boxer
→x2, ↑, ↓, →, R1, L1

Fat boxer:
→x2, ↑, ↓, →, R1 x2, L1

Undead boxer
←, ↑, →, ↓, R1 x2, L1

Big gloves
←, →, ↑, ↓, R1, L1

And if that's not enough, there is a hidden wardrobe filled with mad, mad costumes. Here's how you get to them.

Champion costumes
Win the game in Championship mode to unlock the champion costumes.

Hidden New Year's costume
Set the system date to January 1 to unlock a Baby New Year's costume for Joey T.

Hidden St Patrick's Day costume
Set the system date to March 17 to unlock a leprechaun costume for the referee.

Hidden Valentine's Day costume
Set the system date to February 14 to unlock a lover's costume for Lulu Valentine.

Hidden Easter costume
Set the system date to April 23 2001 to unlock a bunny costume for Mama Tua.

Hidden Independence Day costume
Set the system date to July 4 to unlock an Uncle Sam costume for GC Thunder.

Hidden Halloween costume
Set the system date to October 31 to unlock a skeleton costume for JR Flurry.

DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY

While my broom cupboard/executive suite gets fumigated, there's just time to remind you to send in your tips and hard-won hints to appear on these pages. On the other had if you are stuck in a game and can't get any further, put pen to paper and I will endevour to help you out of your fix. Just send all your tips or questions to **Mr Fitz, Hardcore, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW**. Alternatively, email them to **PS2@futurenet.co.uk**. Next month, look out for our exhaustive *SSX* guides plus codes for a comical way down the mountain, and some gravity defying weirdness in *Smuggler's Run*. In the meantime, turn over for some game/machine related help in our new PS2 Q&A column.

Live 1 on 1

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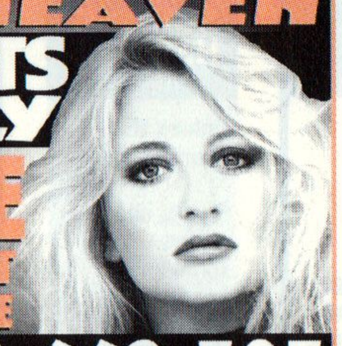
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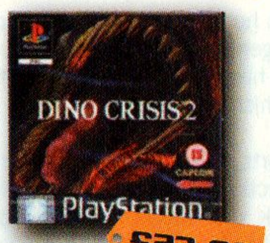
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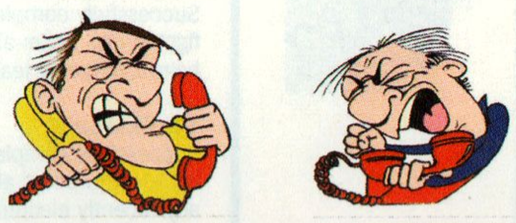
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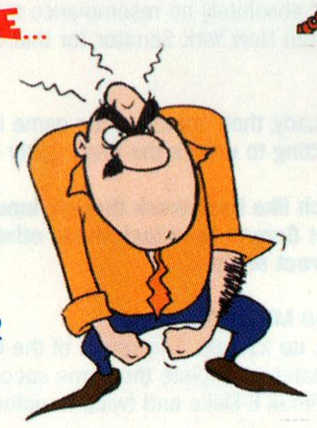
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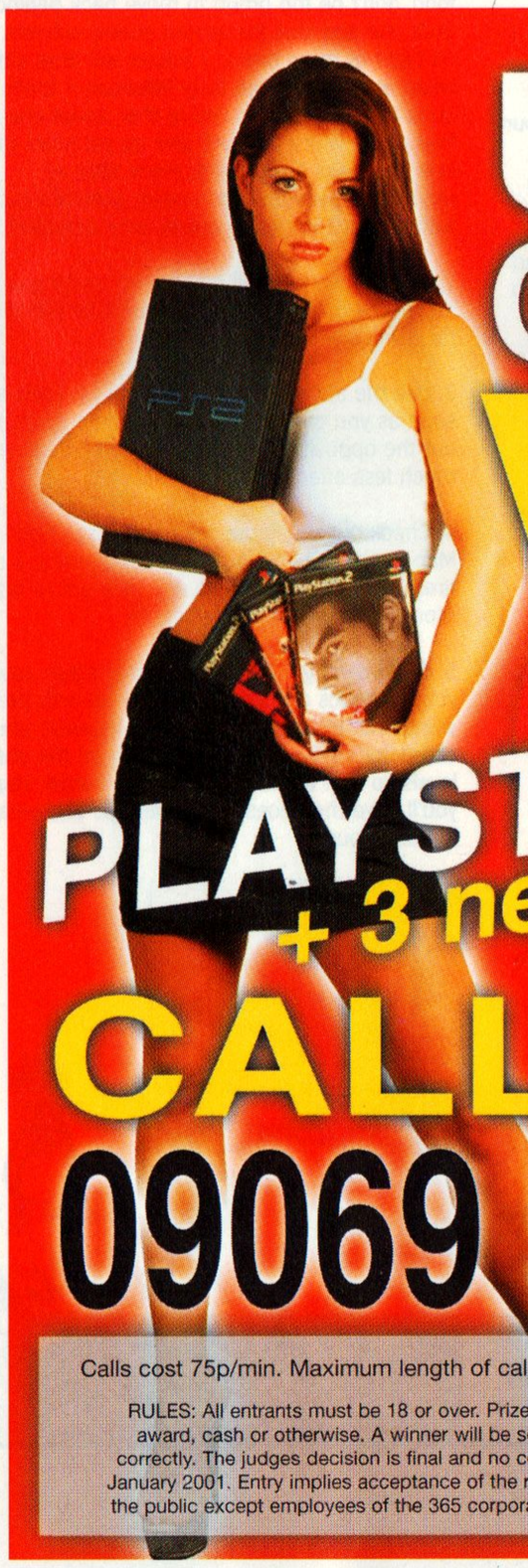
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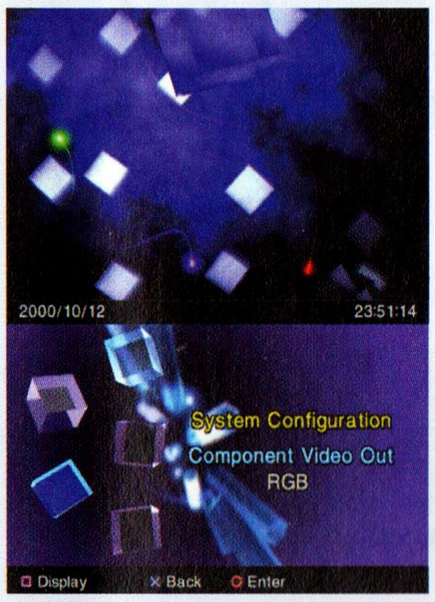
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RULES: All entrants must be 18 or over. Prizes must be accepted as offered; there can be no alternative award, cash or otherwise. A winner will be selected at random from those who answer both questions correctly. The judges decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into. The closing date is 31st January 2001. Entry implies acceptance of the rules as finally and legally binding. The competition is open to the public except employees of the 365 corporation. A full list of terms and conditions are available by post.

Q&A

Since the PS2 went on sale we have been inundated with questions.So to clear these obstructions on the path to the Third Place in one go, we present to you our first Q&A session. Write us at HardCore Q&A or PS2@futurenet.co.uk.



Problems with configuring PS2 for DVD playback? Maybe we can help.

GOING THE DISTANCE

I greatly respect the power and potential of PlayStation 2, but will it stay strong in the long run? It will be receiving fierce competition from both Microsoft's X-Box and Nintendo's GameCube, and so far SCEE has not proven that it can fend off these rivals. Both are faster (just over 400MHz) and they too have great developers working for them – including Rare, which produced landmark games such *Perfect Dark* and *GoldenEye*. How does PS2 plan to stay on top?

Chris Ingram, via email

Take a look at the difference between early PSone titles and, say, GT2 *and you'll understand how developers have been able to get more and more out of the same piece of hardware. PS2 is a lot more powerful than its predecessor. So when you extrapolate its potential for growth from great launch games such as* SSX *and* Tekken Tag, *you'll appreciate that PS2 hasn't even warmed up yet. Even though GameCube and Xbox are relatively unknown quantities, it'd be unwise to suggest that PS2 won't be putting up some very stiff competition.*

It's also worth looking at how Sony plans to develop PS2's functionality over the years to come. Once equipped with a broadband modem and Hard Disk Drive, PS2 will be all set to become a home entertainment hub. What does this mean? Well, imagine coming home and deciding you want to play a game, just pop in the disc. If you want to expand the game you could download extras off the Internet on to the Hard Disk Drive. If you decide you want check out the photos on your digital camera just plug it in. If you want to watch a film you will be able to download it off the Net or whack in a DVD, and you can even just listen to a CD.

This vision of the not-to-distant future is possible thanks to Sony's interests in both hardware and media content (films, music, games etc). Reason enough to feel confident that PS2 will give challengers a run for their money throughout its lifetime.

PC VS PS2

As a console virgin I am alarmed to hear whispers that my PS2 will only deliver the same as a mid- to high-end PC in terms of punch, and looking at the specs I am suffering from further doubts. How does the clock speed of PS2 compare with my PII 400? How would it compare to a PIII 1000? How does the 32Mb of RAM compare to my PC's 128Mb of RAM?

Am I going to be disappointed when the time for consummation comes or is it a case of it's not the size that matters, it's what you do with it?

Mark Maloney (Revd), via email

There is no denying that, on paper, PS2's specifications will not 'beat' a desktop PC. To compare specs in this way is unfair, though, since it doesn't really take into account how the two machine's architectures differ.

PS2's components (from Graphics Chip to Emotion Engine CPU) have been designed and linked to allow for a very organic flexibility when it comes to creating games for it. This has given software developers a real challenge because they've been forced to start from scratch, planning how best to get the most out of PS2's power for their particular game. This is why, as the developers work with the new machine over the years to come, they'll be able to draw more and more potential out of the same hardware.

PC architecture is too rigid to allow for such organic development. For this reason, PS2 is unlikely to date with the same speed as your average desktop PC (or even, potentially, the upcoming Xbox since it is going to be a PC-based console), so when Revd Maloney says it's not size but how you use what you've got, he's pretty much bang on the money.

BORDER CONTROL

I would be very grateful if you could answer these very important questions for me and many other casual gamers in the UK:

1. Will PS2 games have 60Hz options at boot-up, as is the case with Dreamcast games (to avoid those awful black borders and slower games)?

2. Will your new magazine have information about full-screen and bordered games? I personally do not buy games that have borders due to lazy conversions.

3. Will it be possible to chip a PS2 in the future to play import games?

Miss C Broadley, via email

1. It really depends on the developer. Some PS2 games have the 60Hz option for you to select. Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2 *and* Dead Or Alive 2 *give you this choice.*

2. For now, OPS2 will only mention the lack of a 60Hz option if it seriously affects the gameplay of a particular title.

3. Lastly, it's not impossible that someone will find a way to 'chip' a PS2 in the future. We haven't heard of anyone who has and we wouldn't condone it if they had. It's illegal, and risky, and you invalidate your warranty. Remember some official PSone games detected a chipped machine and refused to play.

BROADBAND DEMAND

If broadband technology is the 'greatest evolution in gaming for 20 years' why wasn't it installed in the last few years with BT – I'm sure it would be the first to get it into our homes?

Joey Welch, via email

As it happens, BT is getting broadband into people's homes as we speak with its Openworld scheme. The take up of BT's ADSL lines (basically a way of transmitting data at high bandwidth through existing phone lines) is moving on apace and by the end of 2001 BT is hoping 75% of Internet-using households in the UK will have access to the service. Providing you live within 3.5 miles of your telephone exchange, you'll be able to go broadband via BT. Check out www.btopenworld.com *for more info and to check if your phone line can be upgraded to ADSL.*

GREEN SCREEN

I have a problem with PS2's DVD playback – the lead that is supplied with PS2 gives out a slightly fuzzy display. This proves to be a problem when viewing DVDs because there is sufficient quality loss when compared to my £200 stand-alone DVD player. I purchased a new SCART lead from my local game store to see if the picture improved. While playing games the picture is razor sharp, but it displays DVD movies with a green picture. I have tried all the possible settings and my PSone's SCART lead to see if I could rectify the problem, but to no avail. Any ideas as to what the problem could be?

Stephen McCartney, via email

We have had a fair few similar questions to Stephen's and the answer needs more space than we have here. To read what the people at SCEE have to say about this problem, turn to page 56 of 'Spy' for a full explanation.

VERY BASIC

My brother is a computer games programmer and has a question: is YA BASIC any good for programming his own games on PS2 because he usually uses C++?

Chris Price, via email

YA BASIC (which comes on the PS2 demo disc) is a simple programming language that is an great for people interested in making their own, basic programs. You won't be able to create anything as advanced as Gran Turismo 4 *with it sadly. That would need C++ – a more advanced tool than YA BASIC – and if you can use it already YA will offer nothing new.*

DISC DILEMMA

I have read that the discs PS2 uses are more expensive than those made for PSone. Your magazine has one of these discs on the cover each month and this has been a concern of mine because if the discs are more expensive, wouldn't the mag be as well?

Justin Heywood, via email

There are two disc types. DVD discs are more expensive to produce and eventually more and more PS2 games will be produced on them. But for now the majority of launch games are produced on CD-ROMs like PSone games (although the content quality is, of course, of a different generation). Hence our demo disc has followed suit and the magazine price remains static. As more games are produced on DVD, the price of the discs will fall. When that happens, your OPS2 *disc will be made on DVD.* □

SHORT ANSWERS

There will be more Q&A next month but here is a burst of info to answer some of your quick queries:

PSone Memory Cards can only be used on PS2 to save PSone games **»You can use your PSone RFU cable with a PS2** »It's very unlikely that Sony will produce a CD-RW unit to connect to PS2, considering its financial stake in media content as well as hardware **»PS2 comes with a Dual Shock 2 controller but no free 8Mb Memory Card** »PS2 will not be able to connect up to PCs **»No doubt the price of PS2s will come down when enough units have been sold. The magic figure for PSone was 700,000, so expect a similar figure.**

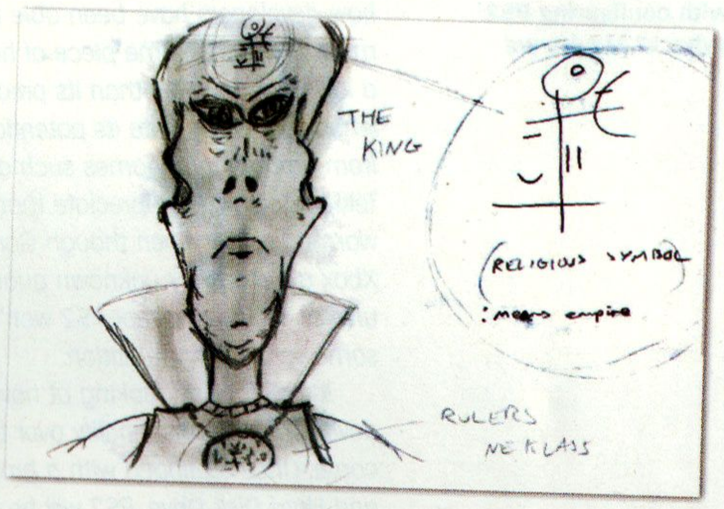
Designer Genes

Got an idea for a game? Then let us know about it. This month's Designer Genes features aliens, mercenaries and some heinous mental power things.





Just one of the mercs you hire to help overcome the Verdiaks. He doesn't exactly look best pleased to be offered the job...



#3: THE VERDIAK INVASION

Designed by: Mark Farrington, Didcot

"*The Verdiak Invasion* is a first-person shooter set just five years away in 2005. An alien race afflicted with strangely oversized foreheads called the Verdiaks are on a mission to ensnare Earth as part of their evil empire...

"As the game loads up you are treated to a stunning FMV sequence showing how the Verdiaks have already conquered five planets. The camera perspective then pans out to their spaceship that is on course for an unsuspecting planet Earth. The huge warship has gone undetected by Earth's defence radars due to the Verdiaks technology that is so advanced it can block out all signals.

"The FMV then takes you to a beautiful summer's day where Special Agent Roberto Flyn – an ex secret agent – is relaxing in a park. All of a sudden a huge black mass covers the sky above blocking out the sun. The mass (as you may have guessed) is the space craft. As the crowds start to run around in a panic all machinery, lights and other electrical items start to explode.

"The action starts here. You take control of Roberto Flyn who after being contacted by the government must get together a band of mercenaries and prevent the aliens overtaking the Planet. This is not going to be easy due to the Verdiaks' psychic powers which they use to manipulate the minds of the humans into following them. You must find a way to overpower their mind control and then give them a damn good shoeing." □

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

The Verdiaks are psychic. They can read people's minds. This handy power enables them to understand the worlds that they are taking over, thus giving them an insight in how best to manipulate people.

THE EXPERT'S OPINION



CHARLES CECIL
MD of *Broken Sword/In Cold Blood* developers, Revolution

"Roberto Flyn is such a larger-than-life tough guy that if you didn't make the game slightly humorous, he may come across as clichéd. I can imagine a square jawed Roberto bouncing around a crazy Earth zapping hapless aliens in unlikely situations using an array of incredible weapons – a bit like *Earth Worm Jim* meets *Metal Gear Solid*. The psychic power is an interesting twist. Presumably the Verdiaks use their powers to disable Roberto's followers so putting him at a disadvantage. You need to be clearer on how you see the gameplay working, but as an initial proposal it is a great start."

WRITE TO:

Designer Genes, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email **PS2@futurenet.co.uk**. Please try to keep your designs within the 250 word limit, and don't forget to include big colourful drawings to bring your words to life. Prizes to be won!

OPS2ometer

What's hot, what's not, what's out there..

RGB Scart

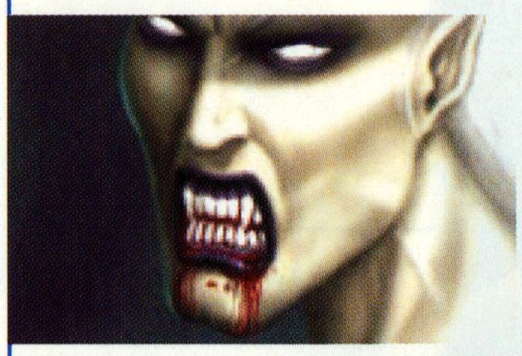
S-Video

Composite

RF

FEVER

Flogging your PS2 for two grand



Crystal Dynamics unveils ***Blood Omen 2*** and we be scared. "Looking very nice," says Lawrence bloke.

The trouser-worrying threat that is ***Half-Life***.

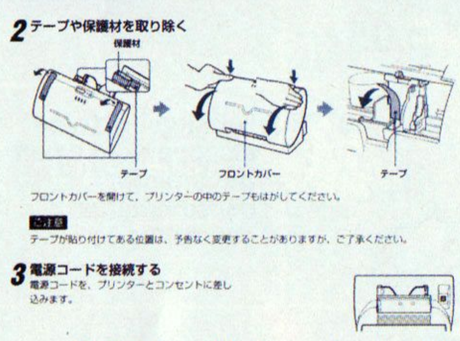
Jarring off Dreamcast owners with bonus ***Code Veronica*** treats.

Sweet sweet **Virgin** and their brought forward review things.

Sefton. Because he said so. Angrily.

The realisation that ***The Matrix*** is the *Brothers In Arms* of the DVD Generation. Deep.

CHILL

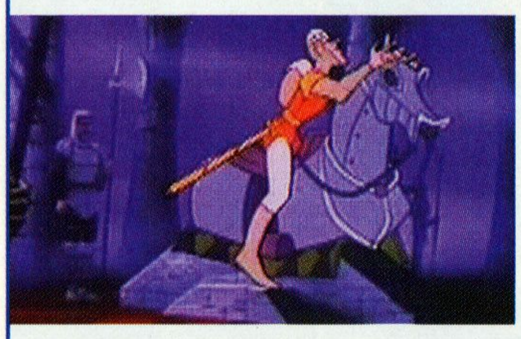


Not being able to understand the instructions on the **PopEgg** printer.

The brave lads of *OPS2* being given a kicking by the **Music Division** at footie last night. Ringers the lot of 'em.

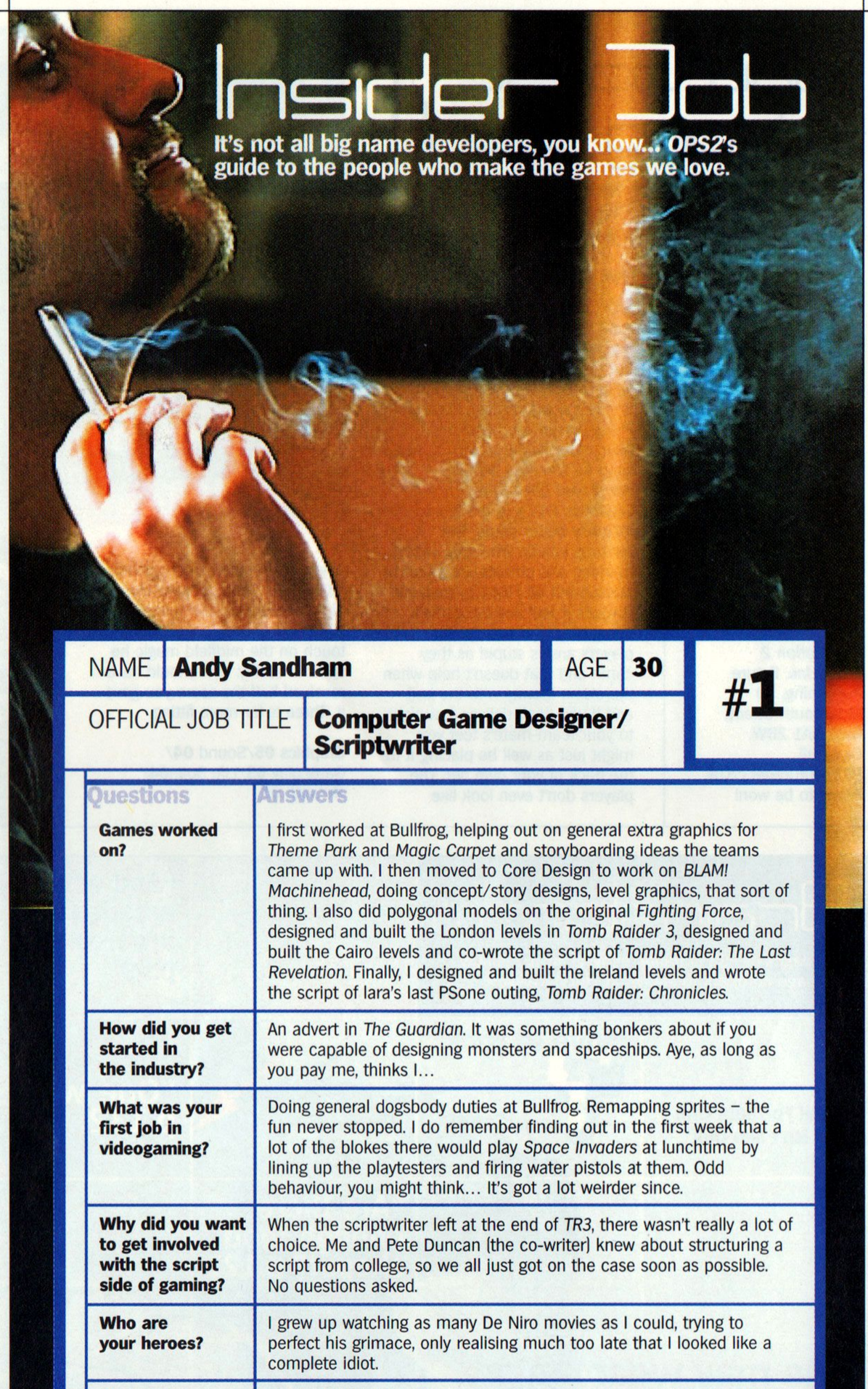
The artistically-barren streets of **San Francisco**.

Yes, yes, yes – but is it **SCART**?



Dragon's Lair and its insipid ilk. Have we not learned from the mistakes of the past? No. No, we bloody haven't.

Not flogging your PS2 for two grand when you realise that it's tabloid arse and you don't get a sodding dickie bird from your small ad in the *Bath Chronicle*.



Insider Job

It's not all big name developers, you know... *OPS2*'s guide to the people who make the games we love.

NAME	**Andy Sandham**	AGE	**30**	**#1**
OFFICIAL JOB TITLE	**Computer Game Designer/ Scriptwriter**			

Questions	Answers
Games worked on?	I first worked at Bullfrog, helping out on general extra graphics for *Theme Park* and *Magic Carpet* and storyboarding ideas the teams came up with. I then moved to Core Design to work on *BLAM! Machinehead*, doing concept/story designs, level graphics, that sort of thing. I also did polygonal models on the original *Fighting Force*, designed and built the London levels in *Tomb Raider 3*, designed and built the Cairo levels and co-wrote the script of *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*. Finally, I designed and built the Ireland levels and wrote the script of lara's last PSone outing, *Tomb Raider: Chronicles*.
How did you get started in the industry?	An advert in *The Guardian*. It was something bonkers about if you were capable of designing monsters and spaceships. Aye, as long as you pay me, thinks I...
What was your first job in videogaming?	Doing general dogsbody duties at Bullfrog. Remapping sprites – the fun never stopped. I do remember finding out in the first week that a lot of the blokes there would play *Space Invaders* at lunchtime by lining up the playtesters and firing water pistols at them. Odd behaviour, you might think... It's got a lot weirder since.
Why did you want to get involved with the script side of gaming?	When the scriptwriter left at the end of *TR3*, there wasn't really a lot of choice. Me and Pete Duncan (the co-writer) knew about structuring a script from college, so we all just got on the case soon as possible. No questions asked.
Who are your heroes?	I grew up watching as many De Niro movies as I could, trying to perfect his grimace, only realising much too late that I looked like a complete idiot.
Best script you've ever read?	*LA Confidential* was very impressive because it took a hugely complex book and made it easily accessible. But realistically, you'd be looking at something like *Raiders of the Lost Ark* – lots of shooting people and snogging birds, can't argue with that.
What books do your read for influence?	You tend to read a lot of the 'mysteries of the world' type books when you're working on *Tomb Raider*. But seeing as we all believe in ghosties and monsters on the team, this isn't really a bad thing...
What do you reckon to the standard of videogame scripts?	I think there is a lot of crap out there – frustrated movie makers writing their next epic and trying to fit the game around it. What you've got to realise is that at present the technology just won't carry it. PC games are moving in the right direction, but console-wise I think it'll be next gen before we see proper character development, a flowing story line, etc...
Of what piece are you most proud?	*Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* was probably the most squarely entertaining script. If you get entertained by that sort of thing.
How do you see your job changing?	Complex scripts and more detailed levels. There's a lot of scope for using your imagination.
What advice would you give to someone who wanted to do your job?	You'd be wanting to pursue some kind of scriptwriting/video course. As far as I know, there's a few computer game specific courses coming up now, as well. A good way to get in with little experience is WAP gaming stuff, which is in it's infancy. Then as soon as you get the interview, sit glaring at the panel, occasionally ignoring them and picking fluff off your jacket, whilst De Niro grimacing profusely...

You Got It Wrong, Son!

Do you think we've unfairly reviewed a game? Think you know better than us? Then tell us about it here.

Jim Milne, Darlington

SIx? I can understand you don't want to be too harsh on games because you want the PS2 to sell but how much butt-licking do you want to do? Your review started to uncover some of the things wrong with *FIFA* (unresponsive, no delicate or subtle moves) but you were far too easy with it.
I've played *ISS* and on my Japanese PS2 and *ISS* is an infinitely better game. The controls handle smoothly, volleys, marking and physics are all up to scratch but all *FIFA* can manage is make it feel like the game's being played in treacle. The players are as stupid as they come and that doesn't help when there's no leeway with the ball and if you don't deliver it straight to your team-mate's feet you might just as well be placing it in the back of your own net. The players don't even look like anyone particularly recognisable either. Paul Scholes looks like a big ginger gorilla and moves with the grace of one as well, not a touch on the midfield magic he spins in reality. *FIFA* should have received half the score you gave it. Three is far more fitting.

Graphics **05**/Sound **04**/
Gameplay **03**/Life Span**04**/
Overall: 03


REVIEW
FIFA 2001

FIFA 2001

The Premiership season never looked as good – but are *FIFA 2001*'s pretty boys afraid to get their boots muddy?

//The movement of *FIFA 2001*'s many pros is almost balletic//

THE FIFA 2001 ALL STARS

FIFA 2001
Last issue our score of *FIFA 2001* ruffled a few feathers. Some of you were following the gaming journalists' choice of *ISS*, while others felt we were far too harsh in the score it got.

Alex Tate, Stockport

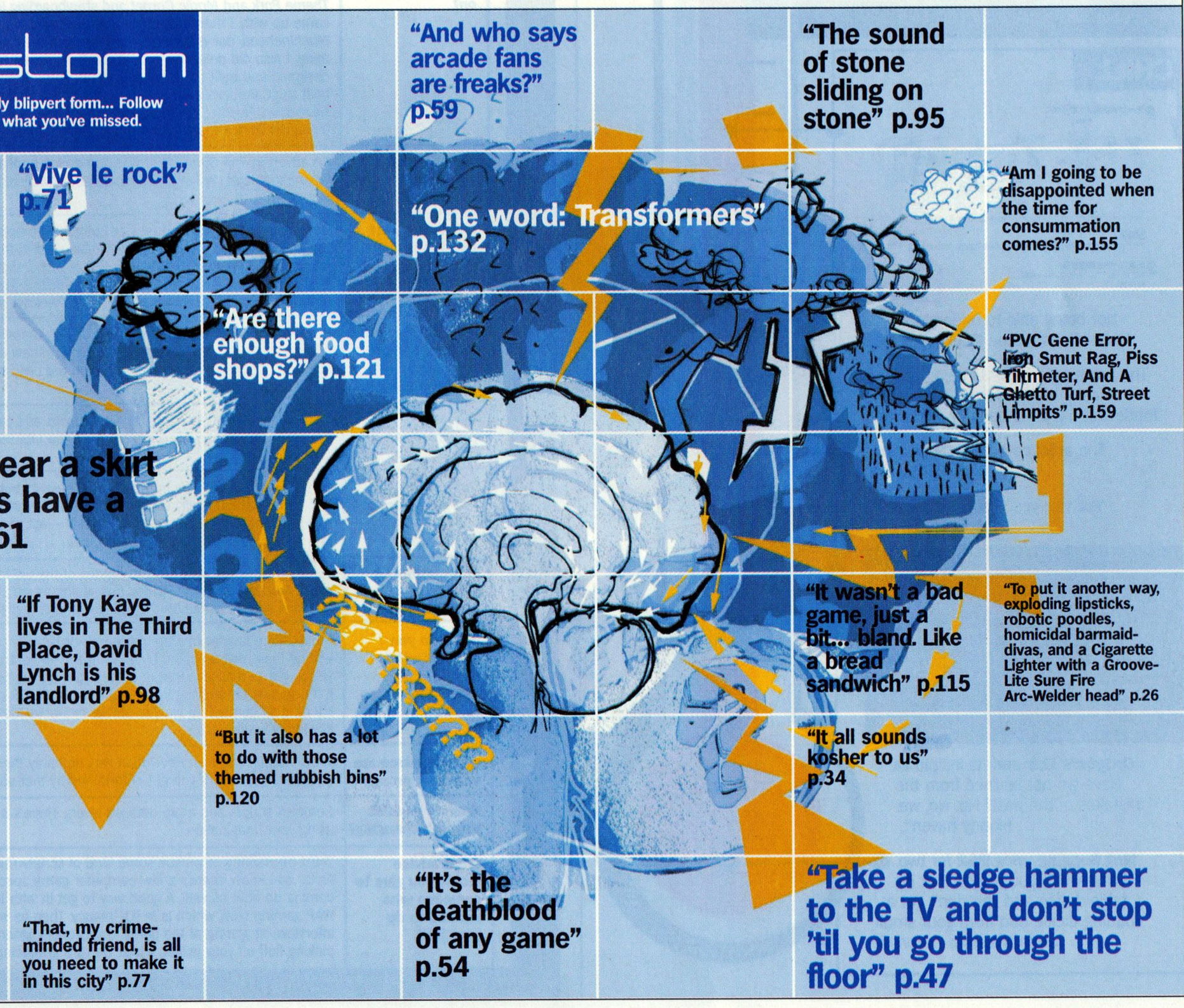
What is it with you people? Is there some faded Eighties football player turning up at your office with sheepskin jacket pockets stuffed with bungs if you talk up *ISS* at the expense of *FIFA 2001*? *FIFA* is clearly a better game and it goes way deeper than spotting famous faces on the pitch. That's not to say that the look of the game isn't important. *FIFA* outplays the opposition when it comes to graphics and player animation. When real matches rely so much on atmosphere why would you go for a game that gives you less than *FIFA*? And as for the gameplay? You've got sheer speed, frantic goal mouth action and some of the most over the top scoring ever. Sure if total realism means a 'thrilling' 0-0 draw then be my guest. But don't penalise *FIFA 2001* for looking great and playing like a dream.

Graphics **09**/Sound **09**/
Gameplay **09**/Lifespan **09**/
Overall 09

WRITE TO
You Got It Wrong, Son!, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.
Or email
PS2@futurenet.co.uk.
Prizes to be won!

Brainstorm

164 pages of PS2 in handy blipvert form... Follow the page numbers to see what you've missed.



"And who says arcade fans are freaks?" p.59

"The sound of stone sliding on stone" p.95

"Vive le rock" p.71

"Real Formula One just isn't like that" p.74

"One word: Transformers" p.132

"Am I going to be disappointed when the time for consummation comes?" p.155

"Are there enough food shops?" p.121

"PVC Gene Error, Iron Smut Rag, Piss Tiltmeter, And A Ghetto Turf, Street Limpits" p.159

"He may wear a skirt but he does have a sword" p.161

"If Tony Kaye lives in The Third Place, David Lynch is his landlord" p.98

"It wasn't a bad game, just a bit... bland. Like a bread sandwich" p.115

"To put it another way, exploding lipsticks, robotic poodles, homicidal barmaid-divas, and a Cigarette Lighter with a Groove-Lite Sure Fire Arc-Welder head" p.26

"But it also has a lot to do with those themed rubbish bins" p.120

"But first on Earth, as Vampyre sent, thy corpse shall from its tomb be rent. Then ghastly haunt thy native place and..." p.90

"It all sounds kosher to us" p.34

"That, my crime-minded friend, is all you need to make it in this city" p.77

"It's the deathblood of any game" p.54

"Take a sledge hammer to the TV and don't stop 'til you go through the floor" p.47

ILLUSTRATION: MR JAGO

The Quiz

Welcome to the inaugral *OPS2* Quiz, where the answers are backwards, the rewards are intangible and... WE'VE GOT A SPOT THE BALL!

NICE AND EASY

The questions whose answers are in this issue. Rack up those points.

1. Which *Star Wars* fighter is allegedly moving from PC to PS2?

2. What's the Japanese collective phrase for the Konami-developed music action games?

3. What game was Capcom's *Devil May Cry* originally intended to be?

4. Who visualised The Third Place for PlayStation 2?

5. Who 'directed' the *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace* games?

DRAGON TEAR HUMAN

Or in the right order, The Anagram Round. Shuffle the letters to find the game. Look, it made us laugh...

1. PVC Gene Error

2. Iron Smut Rag

3. Piss Tiltmeter

4. And A Ghetto Turf

5. Street Limpits

MOVIE WATCH

Because, yes, you can watch movies on it.

1. Name the record shop owned by John Cusack's character in *High Fidelity*.

2. Who does Russell Crowe play in *Gladiator*?

3. Which Scotsman was originally penned in to play Wolverine in *X-Men*?

4. In *Stuart Little*, who plays Stuart's foster parents?

5. What's the name of Edward Norton's character in the film *Fight Club*?

TRUE OR FALSE

Do we really have to explain this one?

1. *Tekken*'s Jun Kazama is Jin Kazama's cousin.

2. Solid Snake was a member of Hound Dog.

3. *Resident Evil* is set in Raccoon City.

4. Hideo Kojima is a big Cure fan.

5. *The Getaway* is being developed by SCEE's Team Camden.

MADE IN JAPAN

Here's the Japanese game title. What's the English 'translation'?

1. *Biohazard 3: Last Escape*

2. *World Soccer Jikkyou Winning Eleven 3 - World Cup France '98*

3. *Saru Getchu*

4. *Shin Sangoku Musou*

5. *Surfroid: The Legendary Surfer*

SAM'S KONAMI QUIZ

In which our sad Dep Ed tests your knowledge of which Konami studio made which game. Us neither.

1. *Metal Gear Solid 2*

2. *ISS*

3. *Shadow Of Memories*

4. *7 Blades*

5. *Keyboard Mania*

OLD SCHOOL DAYS

Questions for those who were big back in the day...

1. What was the sequel to the cult *Tron* game?

2. What was the sequel to the ZX Spectrum's *Manic Miner*?

3. Who developed 1981 vector hit, *Tempest*?

4. 1987's *Rainbow Islands* is a puzzle sequel by Taito to what game?

5. Who developed BBC space strategy hit, *Elite*?

STARRING IN...

Five characters, five games. You guess the latter.

1. Olga Strom

2. Roger

3. The First Lady

4. Ash

5. Tina Armstrong

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Because you really shouldn't know these.

1. *F1 Racing Championship*: Name the developer, the publisher and distributor.

2. What date was the PlayStation 2 announced in Tokyo?

3. What does the letters DVD stand for?

4. The weapon? Sci-fi Handgun. The game?

5. "I can play it with my six-year-old." Who is describing the appeal of *Pokémon*?

SPOT THE BALL



ANSWERS (USE A MIRROR)

Nice And Easy
1. Star Wars: Obi-Wan
2. Bemani
3. The new Biohazard game
4. David Lynch
5. Don Bluth

Dragon Tear Human
1. RC Revenge Pro
2. Gran Turismo
3. TimeSplitters
4. Grand Theft Auto
5. TimeSplitters

Movie Watch
1. Championship Vinyl
2. Maximus Decimus Meridius
3. M:I-2's Dougray Scott
4. Geena Davis and Hugh Laurie
5. He doesn't have one. Although you can have Jack at a push

True Or False
1. False - She's his mum
2. False - He's a member of Fox Hound
3. True
4. True
5. False - It's developed by Team Soho

Made In Japan
1. Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
2. ISS Pro '98
3. Ape Escape
4. Dynasty Warriors 2
5. Surfing H30

Sam's Konami Quiz
1. KCEJ West
2. KCEO
3. KCET
4. KCEJ East
5. KCEJ West

Old School Days
1. Discs Of Tron
2. Jet Set Willy
3. Atari
4. Bubble Bobble or Bust-A-Move
5. David Braben, Ian Bell

Starring In...
1. TimeSplitters
2. Tekken Tag Tournament
3. Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2
4. X-Squad
5. Dead Or Alive 2

Mission Impossible
1. Ubi Soft, Video System, Konami
2. 4 March 1999
3. Digital Versatile Disc
4. TimeSplitters
5. MGS's Hideo Kojima



Spot the Ball

Nope, it's not in the centre. We moved it a bit over.

YOUR RATING

30-46 Most Deadly

20-30 Most Peaceful

10-20 Hoarder

0-10 Underequipped

Database

Want to know more? Need to know a release date? What about a game in the future? Something gone wrong? Here's all the info you could ever need...

3DO 01895 456 700
www.3doeurope.com
3DO Europe, 21-23 Mossop St, London, SW3 2LY

ACCLAIM 0207 344 5000
www.acclaimnation.com
112-120 Brompton Rd, Knightsbridge, London, SW3 1JJ

ACTIVISION 01895 456 789
www.activision.com
Long Island House, Suite 3a, 1-4 Marple Way, London, W3 0RQ

CODEMASTERS 01926 814 132
www.codemasters.com
Stoneythorpe, Southam, Warwickshire, CV33 ODL

CRAVE 00353 617 020
www.cravegames.com
58, Canalot Studios, 222 Kensal Rd, London, W10 5BN

CRYO 0121 250 5072
www.cryo-interactive.com
186a Stratford Rd, Shirley, Solihull, B90 3BQ

DISNEY INTERACTIVE 0990 998 877
www.disney.co.uk
PlayStation Careline, PO Box 2047, London, W1A 3DN

EIDOS INTERACTIVE 0121 356 0831
www.eidos.co.uk
1 Hartfield Rd, Wimbledon, London, SW19 3RU

ELECTRONIC ARTS 0870 243 2435
www.ea.com
2000 Hillswood Drive, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 0EU

EMPIRE 0800 783 0156
www.empire.co.uk
The Spire, 677 High Rd, North Finchley, N12 ODA

FOX INTERACTIVE 01932 454 032
www.foxinteractive.com
2000 Hillswood Drive, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 0EU

HASBRO 01454 893 900
www.hasbro-interactive.com
2 Groundwood Avenue, Stockley Park, Uxbridge

INFOGRAMES 0208 222 9700
www.infogrames.com
116 Baker St, London, W1M 1LB

JVC INTERACTIVE 0207 240 3121
www.jvc.com
44 Wellington St, Covent Garden, London, WC2E 7BD

KONAMI 0208 582 5573
www.konami-europe.com
7/9 The Oaks, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7LF

LEGO 01753 495 453
www.lego.com
33 Bath Rd, Slough, Berks, SL1 3UF

MICROIDS 0208 901 7388
www.microids.com
2 Gayton Rd, Harrow, London, HA1 2XU

MIDAS INTERACTIVE 01223 522 000
www.midas-interactive.co.uk
Matrix House, Cambridge Business Park, CB4 OHH

MIDWAY 0207 938 4488
www.midway.com
96 Kensington High St, London, W8 4SG

SCEE 0990 998 877
www.playstation-europe.com
PlayStation Careline, PO Box 2047, London, W1A 3DN

SCi 0207 585 3308
www.sci.co.uk
11 Ivory House, Plantation Wharf, York Rd, SW11 3TN

TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE 0870 124 2222
www.take2games.com
Saxon House, 2-4 Victoria St, Windsor, Berks, SL4 1BY

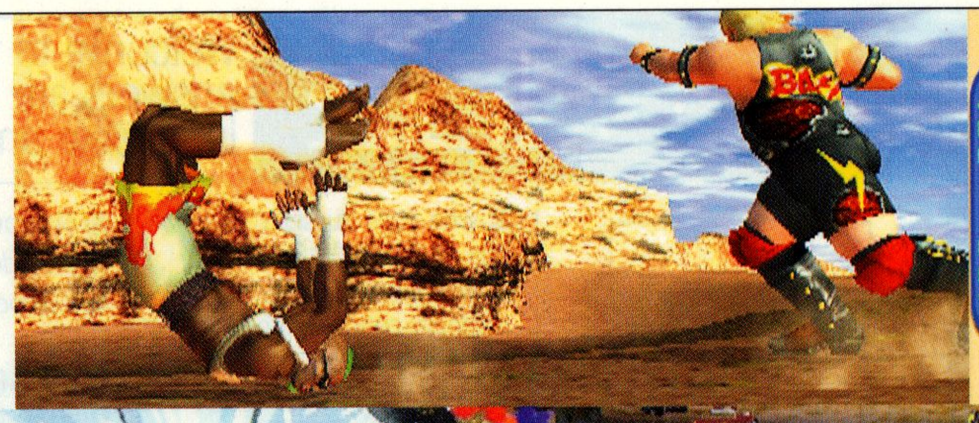
THQ 01483 767 656
www.thq.com
Dukes Court, Duke St, Woking, Surrey, GU21 5BH

UBI SOFT 0208 944 9000
www.ubisoft.co.uk
1 Weir Rd, Wimbledon, London, SW19 8UX

VIRGIN INTERACTIVE 0207 551 4222
www.vie.co.uk
74A Charlotte St, London, W1P 1LR

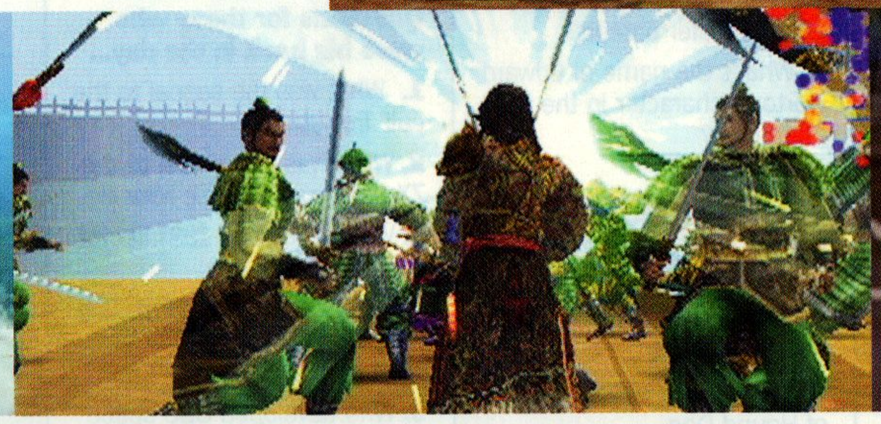
The Shortlist

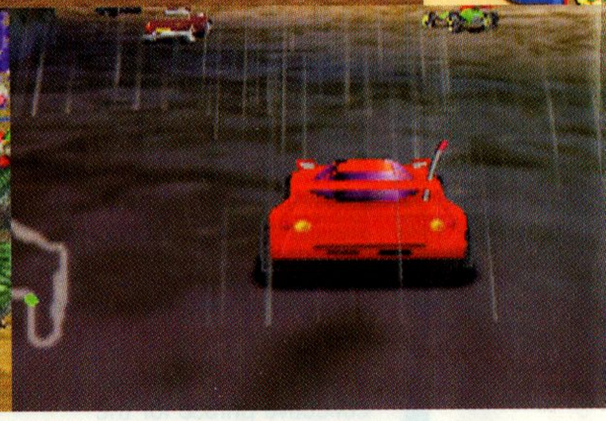
If it's for PS2, and on sale in the UK, then we've played it, argued about it, and played it some more. Our potted judgements begin below.











AQUA AQUA: WETRIX 2.0
☐Publisher: **SCi**
☐Developer: **Zed Two**
Addictive, well-realised new take on the familiar *Wetrix* puzzle game formula. On a small, table-top landscape, you're rewarded for creating an even balance of earth and water by building walls to form lakes. These are made using blocks that drop, *Tetris*-style, from the heavens. Further complications ensue. Slight, but amusing – and costs just £25 too.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-4**
Graphics **06**/Sound **07**
Gameplay **08** Life span **07**
Overall 07

DEAD OR ALIVE 2
☐Publisher: **SCEE**
☐Developer: **Tecmo**
Destined to be overshadowed by *Tekken*, but *DOA2* has more going for it than the bobbling melon count. Graphically superior to the King of the Iron Fist and with a more strategy-based gameplay, *DOA2*'s appeal lies in its open arenas, blistering frame rate and wealth of modes. Sadly, a lack of characters and user-unfriendly gameplay will keep *DOA2* a cult hit – but oh, what a terrible cult...
Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1-4**
Graphics: **08**/Sound: **04**
Gameplay: **08**/Life span: **06**
Overall: 07

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2
☐Publisher: **Midas Interactive**
☐Developer: **Tecmo**
Hack, slash, hack, slash, hack... PSone gamers may have enjoyed such visceral delights with *Bushido Blade* but *Dynasty Warriors 2* adds strategy to the samurai-styled mix. Command armies across the rice fields of 3rd Century China, swapping from general to general in your efforts to shape and win the war. True, it becomes a tad repetitive as you alternate between action and strategy but even some questionable AI can't stop Tecmo's terrier glimpsing at the future of PS2 strategy games.
Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1**
Graphics: **08**/Sound: **08**
Gameplay: **07**/Life span: **06**
Overall: 07

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD
☐Publisher: **Konami**
☐Developer: **KCEO**
Graphically impressive multi-part athletics sim, built up of ten events including 100m, long jump, javelin, pole vault, hurdles, weightlifting, trap shooting... and rhythmic gymnastics? (Actually, the stand-out event.) A simplistic and uninspiring control system spoil what might have been a right corker.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-4**
Graphics **09**/Sound **07**
Gameplay **05**/Life span **04**
Overall 06

ESPN WINTER X-GAMES SNOWBOARDING
☐Publisher: **Konami**
☐Developer: **KCEO**
Overly realistic snowboarding sim, hampered by bland graphics, dull courses, and sedate, unresponsive controls. There's some depth to be found if you persevere, though, and the game provides an undeniably substantial one-player experience.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-5**
Graphics **06**/Sound **05**
Gameplay **05**/Life span **07**
Overall 06

FANTAVISION
☐Publisher: **SCEE**
☐Developer: **SCEI**
An interesting oddity – the world's first fireworks game. Modest in size, but highly original and playable, it's a puzzler that encourages you to link chains of ascending fireworks, then detonate them to crowd pleasing effect. A game of random beauty.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **08**/Sound **07**
Gameplay **08**/Life span **05**
Overall 07

FIFA 2001
☐Publisher: **EA Sports**
☐Developer: **EA Sports (Canada)**
The question remains: *ISS* or *FIFA*? This was the year when *FIFA* could've trounced its rival (*ISS* is based on the inferior N64 version, not the PSone's *ISS Pro Evolution*). Unfortunately, all the arguments against *FIFA* from previous incarnations still apply – all mouth, no trousers.
Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1-4**
Graphics: **10**/Sound: **09**
Gameplay: **05**/Life span: **05**
Overall: 06

GRADIUS III & IV
☐Publisher: **Konami**
☐Developer: **KCET**
Pointless reprise of 2D, side-scrolling spaceship shoot-'em-up from before the dawn of time. Or 1990, as we know it. Tedious, poorly ported and of minority interest only.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **02**/Sound **03**
Gameplay **03**/Life span **02**
Overall 02

H30 SURFING
☐Publisher: **Take 2**
☐Developer: **ASCII**
With the success of *Tony Hawk*'s on PSone, surfing is the next 'xtreme' sport to make it onto consoles. Despite some pretty wave visuals, Tony's crown remains as *H30 Surfing* is an opportunity missed. Overly-complicated controls – wot, no Japanese *Surfroid* controller? – and limited gameplay hamper the proceedings, while dodgy camera angles only serve to obscure what fun you've managed to glean from the whole soggy affair. Add on some unimaginative stunt moves and surf's most definitely not up.
Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics: **04**/Sound: **04**
Gameplay: **05**/Life span: **04**
Overall: 04

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER
☐Publisher: **Konami**
☐Developer: **KCEO**
Always the critic's favourite but rarely the punter's, the *ISS* series has traditionally provided a more challenging game than big rival *FIFA*, but been less generous in its provision of real player names or easily scored goals. The PS2 version has added genuine squads (at last) and more instant gratification, but kept the clever AI and range of moves. The perfect compromise? Almost – some erratic animation and awful commentary let the side down.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-4**
Graphics **07**/Sound **07**
Gameplay **08**/Life span **08**
Overall 08

MADDEN NFL 2001
☐Publisher: **EA Sports**
☐Developer: **EA Sports**
Okay, so it's an American football game, which will put most people off immediately. A shame, for otherwise this is PS2's most accomplished sports game so far – extremely thorough, smoothly presented, boasting great commentary and highly rewarding to learn. Numerous modes should provide fans with months of playing time.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-4**
Graphics **09**/Sound **08**
Gameplay **08**/Life span **09**
Overall 08

MIDNIGHT CLUB
☐Publisher: **Rockstar**
☐Developer: **Angel Studios**
Speedy urban racing game, boasting impressively huge environments – but not much else. Your job is to beat assorted street racers in a series of chases around NY and London, winning their cars, *Grease*-style, with victory. Arcade-like, in a dated sort of way, and forgettable.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **05**/Sound **06**
Gameplay **04**/Life span **04**
Overall 04

NHL 2001
☐Publisher: **EA Sports**
☐Developer: **EA Sports (Canada)**
As with the superb *Madden NFL 2001*, EA Sports' perennial ice hockey licence has stepped up to the mark for its PS2 debut. Blissful graphics should sate realism junkies while the gameplay is infinitely tweakable, allowing everything from arcade *Slapshot* fights to the subtlest of gaming nuances. Best as a two-player, *NHL 2001* is ideal for recreating that scene in *Swingers*. Yes, that good.
Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics: **09**/Sound: **08**
Gameplay: **08**/Life span: **07**
Overall: 08

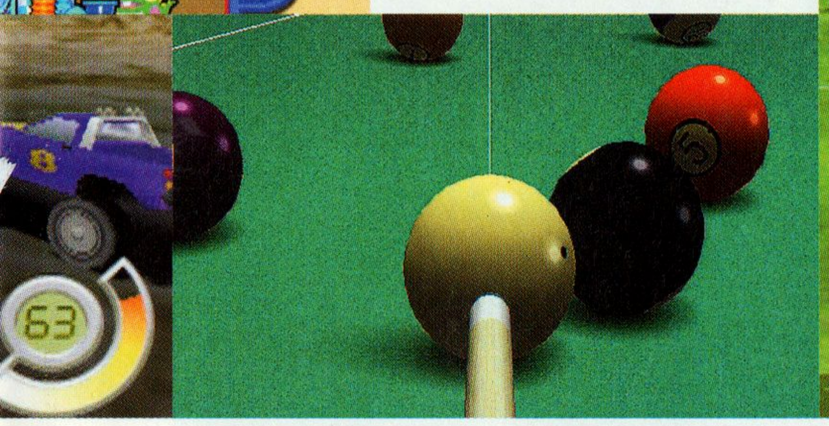
ORPHEN
☐Publisher: **Activision**
☐Developer: **Shade Inc.**
Disappointing Japanese action RPG, short on both depth and adventure thrills, despite such innovative elements as a choice of three story threads to follow. Based on a popular anime series, it follows a young, moody sorcerer on a *D&D* style quest to a mystery island. Unfortunately, the result is repetitive, irritating and downright uninvolving.
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1**
Graphics **04**/Sound **03**
Gameplay **05**/Life span **03**
Overall 04

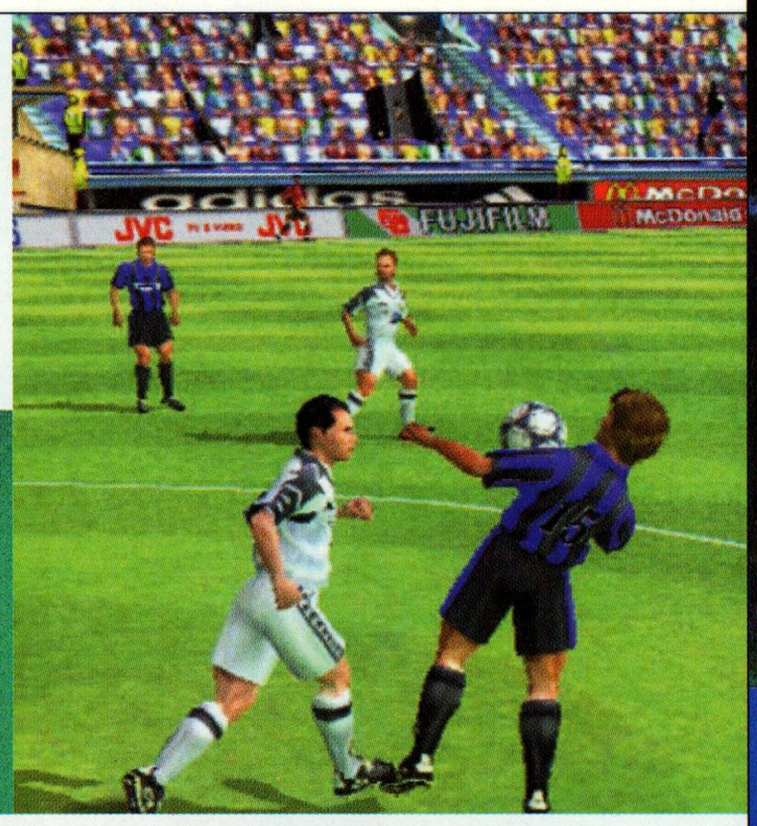
POOLMASTER
☐Publisher: **Take 2**
☐Developer: **Ask**
What is fun in the boozer becomes naff on the PlayStation 2. Despite tidy ball physics, *Poolmaster*'s gameplay is dull and – based on US 8-Ball – has minimal appeal for Brit hustlers. Ludicrous speed levels will have you bouncing all over the place and even a cool Challenge mode won't be enough to save you from sleep. A whole £40 will buy you 50 games of the real deal at 80 pence a game.
Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics: **04**/Sound: **06**
Gameplay: **06**/Life span: **04**
Overall: 05

RAYMAN REVOLUTION
☐Publisher: **Ubi Soft**
☐Developer: **Ubi Soft**
A cartoon exterior may make Rayman's first PS2 escapade look as 'armless as usual (sorry), but this is class stuff. Animation-quality graphics provide the eye candy, and there's real depth on-board with fun mini-games, taxing level design (wait for the volcano level) and a genuine sense of fun. Platformers have yet to jump over the PlayStation 2 but they'll have to ramp up the thrills to overtake Ubi Soft's limbless wonder. Vive la France!
Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1-4**
Graphics: **09**/Sound: **07**
Gameplay: **08**/Life span: **08**
Overall: 08

RC REVENGE PRO
☐Publisher: **Acclaim**
☐Developer: **Acclaim (Cheltenham)**
It took a while for kart racers to hit the PSone but *RC Revenge Pro* gets in there from the off – unfortunately. Last gen graphics, a depressingly sluggish frame rate and hardly taxing gameplay all underachieve and the freedom of developing for a superior console seem to have passed the programmers by – this is actually less sophisticated than the likes of the PSone's *Crash Team Racing*.
Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics: **02**/Sound: **03**
Gameplay: **03**/Life span: **03**
Overall: 03







Clockwise from top left: *Dead or Alive 2, Super Bust-A-Move, FIFA 2001, Poolmaster, RC Revenge Pro Dynasty Warriors 2, H3O Surfing.*

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2

☐Publisher: **Midway**
☐Developer: **Midway**

Marvellous comedy boxing game, picking assorted, increasingly-ridiculous cartoon fighters against such real life luminaries as Michael Jackson, baseball legend Shaquille O'Neal, and a suspiciously familiar looking 'Mr President.' Not much depth, good pick-up-and-play laughs.

Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **07**/Sound **08**
Gameplay **07**/Life span **06**
Overall 07

RIDGE RACER V

☐Publisher: **SCEE**
☐Developer: **Namco**

The world's most frustrating racing game series is back. You've got to respect it for the sense of speed, challenging handling and sharp (perhaps too sharp?) graphics, but jagged edges, limited size and a general lack of originality scupper it. It's a bizarrely airless, unreal-feeling game too. Still, it's PS2's most accomplished racer – for now.

Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **06**/Sound **07**
Gameplay **08**/Life span **07**
Overall 07

SILENT SCOPE

☐Publisher: **Konami**
☐Developer: **KCEO**

Slick but simple shooting gallery-style game, spiced up by big city/terrorist/police sniper dressing. Accurate but not over-picky targeting helps you get into it, but it's tougher than it first seems, while inventive scenarios seemingly loosely based on movies ranging from *True Lies* to The *Last Boy Scout* keep things interesting.

Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1**
Graphics **08**/Sound **06**
Gameplay **08**/Life span **07**
Overall 08

SMUGGLER'S RUN

☐Publisher: **Rockstar**
☐Developer: **Angel Studios**

A great game, with some impressively large free-roaming playing environments. You play a *Dukes of Hazzard*-style nice-guy moonshine smuggler, on assorted missions to get item A from shack B to tree C while the cops try to stop you. Basically it's an excuse for crazed charging up hill and down dale, trying to make the drop before your truck falls to pieces or you are nabbed by the Yankee rozz. Lacks only a banjo-fuelled soundtrack. A hoot.

Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **08**/Sound **08**
Gameplay **06**/Life span **07**
Overall 07

SSX

StarPlayer

☐Publisher: **EA Sports Big**
☐Developer: **EA Sports (Canada)**

Quite simply, the most played game in the *OPS2* offices. This outrageous, inventive, high-speed snowboard game – we hate to say sim, for its crazy courses, ranging from Hawaii-based icebergs to giant pinball tables, are anything but realistic – has got us captivated. It's fast, stylish, easy to pick up but hard to get great at (the vast library of tricks to learn sees to that) and basically rather lovely.

Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **09**/Sound **08**
Gameplay **08**/Life span **08**
Overall 09

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE

☐Publisher: **Acclaim**
☐Developer: **Taito**

Another update of a classic game and like *Gradius III & IV*, a pointless one. The manga-cute graphics and addictive gameplay of yore are here but Taito has refused to give us anything new – no millions of levels, no bonkers 3D sub-levels, no nothing. You can buy the same thing for under half the price on PSone or even download it on an emulator (or maybe your mobile by the time this hits the shelves). Do that rather than shell out £40 for a taste of things gone by.

Reviewed: **Issue #02**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics: **07**/Sound: **04**
Gameplay: **05**/Life span: **02**
Overall: 04

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

☐Publisher: **SCEE**
☐Developer: **Namco**

Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular 1-2 player beat-'em-up. With nearly 40 fighters, plus the new tagging option. And with a free tenpin bowling sub-game, it's got a sense of humour. Too much like a souped-up *Tekken 3* for comfort, though.

Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **09**/Sound **08**
Gameplay **08**/Life span **07**
Overall 08

TIMESPLITTERS

StarPlayer

☐Publisher: **Eidos**
☐Developer: **Free Radical Design**

Fast and frantic first person shooter from part of the team responsible for N64 classic *GoldenEye*. Multiplayer options, meaty weapons, loads of graphical variety and atmosphere, and a barking mad time-travel/zombie/aliens story line that acts as a great excuse for them to design any level they fancied. Great mapmaker feature lets you enjoy the same fun. Surprisingly bloodless and shallower than *GoldenEye* as a one-player game, but an instant classic nonetheless.

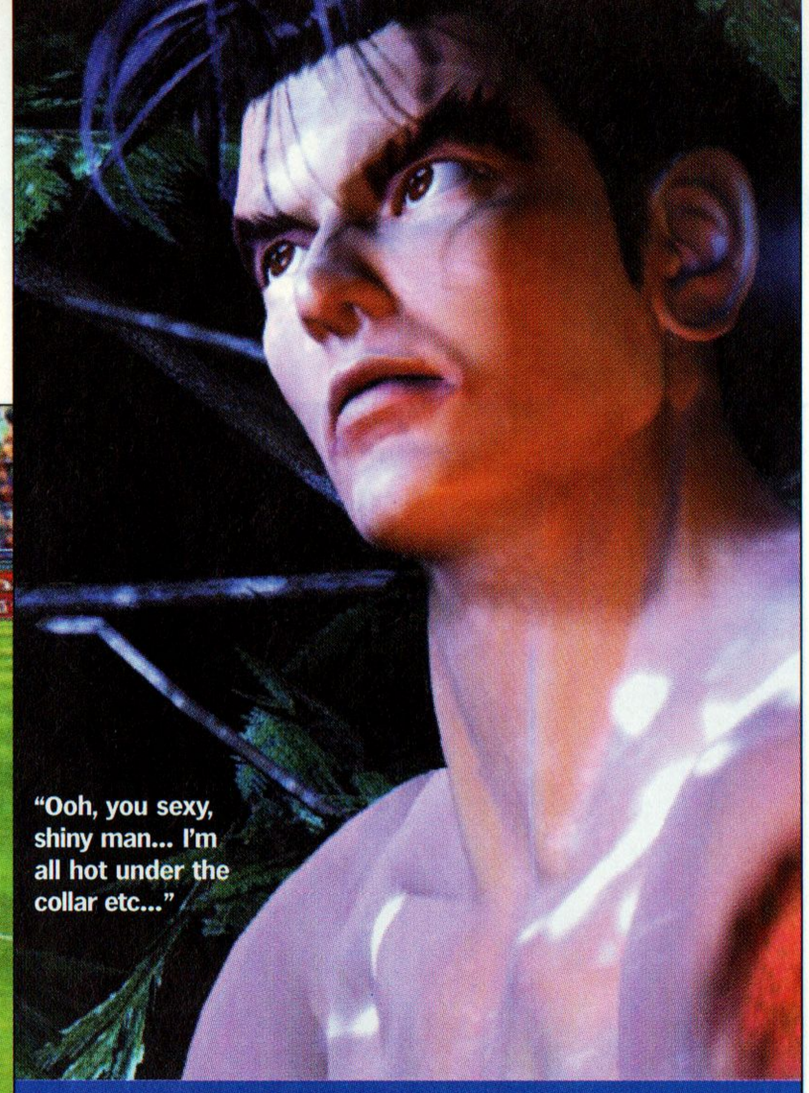
Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-4**
Graphics **09**/Sound **09**
Gameplay **08**/Life span **09**
Overall 09

WILD WILD RACING

☐Publisher: **Rage**
☐Developer: **Rage**

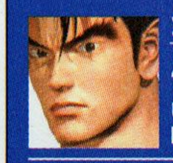
Off-road buggy racing game with merely acceptable looks, and initially discouraging handling. Stick with it, though, and it gets much more satisfying, while a wide range of interconnected game modes keep interest high. Indeed, the stunt course from last issue's demo disc is something of an office favourite.

Reviewed: **Issue #01**
Players: **1-2**
Graphics **06**/Sound **05**
Gameplay **06**/Life span **07**
Overall 06

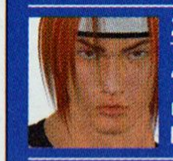


Ladder Of Lust

A change of pace as Ms 'Sooze from Southampton' writes in to nominate her sauciest himbos for this issue's Ladder of Lust. Y'know, this is all getting just the wrong side of weird..



1. JIN KAZAMA (NE)
TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT
"The most perfect, utterly gorgeous and incredibly sexy male CGI ever to grace a mag cover." Fair play.
PS2 appearances: *Tekken Tag* is on sale now



2. HWOARANG (NE)
TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT)
"Cool, streetwise, furry red head. Judging by his relationship with Baek he might not like girls..." Steady.
PS2 appearances: *Tekken Tag* is still on sale now



3. CRASH BANDICOOT (NE)
CRASH BANDICOOT
"Cool, streetwise, furry red head. Probably an animal when it comes to bedroom gymnastics." Now hang on...
PS2 appearances: Coming to PS2 late 2001



4. MITSURUGI (NE)
SOUL CALIBUR 2
"He may wear a skirt but he does have a sword. And *Soul Calibur 2* is coming to PS2." Oooh, hardcore.
PS2 appearances: TBC



5. VOLT (NE)
THE BOUNCER
"Hunky blonde star of forthcoming game. A great bloke to know if you want to jump the queue." Now that's filthy.
PS2 appearances: Coming March 2001



6. DAVID GINOLA (NE)
FIFA 2001
"Features in *FIFA 2001* with perfectly rendered flowing locks. Oh, and 'because eez worth eet'." S**t on the Villa!
PS2 appearances: FIFA 2001 is on sale now.



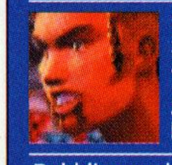
7. HARRY TIPPER (NE)
TIMESPLITTERS
"Superfly Seventies cop who appears in *TimeSplitters*. That quiff was always going to woo the ladies." Saxy.
PS2 appearances: *TimeSplitters* is on sale now



8. SOLID SNAKE (NE)
METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY
"Mysterious and stubbly. Would be labelled by women's magazines as 'the sensitive type'." BUT HE'S GOT A BEARD!
PS2 appearances: *MGS2* is coming late summer 2001



9. ZACK (NE)
DEAD OR ALIVE 2
"A guy who girls would love to be seen in a nightclub with. A smooth mover." Um, that Teletubby costume?
PS2 appearances: *Dead or Alive 2* is on sale now



10. MOBY (NE)
SSX
"The type you meet on a skiing holiday. Plays acoustic guitar, and wears beads." Middle-class loafer, right? Right.
PS2 appearances: *SSX* is on sale now

Bubbling under: Chinese Chef (*TimeSplitters*), Brock (*Unreal*), Ash (*X-Squad*), Joe (*Swing Away Golf*), Rayman (*Rayman Revolution*), Zhang Jiao (*Dynasty Warriors 2*), Jann Lee (*DOA2*). Go Sooze!

VOTE FOR THE LADDER OF LUST!

Send your suggestions for the ladies and lads who deserve to rise up the ladder, to: **Ladder Of Lust, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW**. Or email **PS2@futurenet.co.uk**. Erm, can we please drop this soon?

FACTFILE
Game: **Silent Scope**
Publisher: **Konami**
Developer: **KCEO**
Review: ***OPS2* #01**



#03 Silent Scope

The President and his family are safe from terrorists, but artist Louise Wallace leaves doubt that the ordeal is over.



WHAT?

So what's going on here then?

Having put vast quantities of the terrorist group to body bags, you get to have a cosy one-to-one with their tyrannical leader. With your mission to save the US President and his family having taken you from the city streets, along the highway, through a Superbowl and past a heavily-secured mansion, it reaches a dramatic conclusion by the coast. Now it's just you and the big cheese. One bullet is all you need, right between the eyes. The resulting victory parade sees the main man fry in his boat, the President reunited with his family and a slick credits sequence.

HOW?

So how do you get to watch the fall of Mr Big? Just follow our easy guide.

To view this typical arcade-style outro, you must complete eight progressively taxing stages in Arcade mode. There are variations as to what route through the game you can take, but you will always end up at the same final scenario. It doesn't matter which difficulty level you complete the game on – it's possible that you will have to start on Easy just to see what the fifth stage looks like. The more times you complete the game, the more secrets you will unlock as well.

WHY?

This month Ryan Butt, Editor of sister mag *Power*, describes why getting to the end of *Silent Scope* is such a bonus.

"Without the novelty of actually being able to use a moulded sniper-rifle light-gun (like on the coin-op original) you can concentrate on firing bullets into heads of terrorists. Time is very tight and you have less lives than a half-dead cat, so just getting to the end is a mighty achievement. No matter how cheesy the end sequence, it's great just to have got there. Hopefully, if *Dark Silhouette: Silent Scope 2* ever makes it to PS2, then KCEO will make time to include some exclusive new features.

WHO?

***OPS2*'s guest illustrator is Louise Wallace, whose favourite PSone games are *PaRappa the Rapper*, *WipEout* and *Bust-A-Groove*.**

"For the illustration I thought I would try to get across the idea of the President having a lucky escape, and the relief of being set free into the loving arms of his family. The helicopter is there just to emphasise the drama of it all and the assassin lurking in the shadows is just to show that he may not have killed the leader of the free world this time, but he'll be back. I haven't played PS2 yet – I saw a lad had reserved one in the local paper and he looked very pleased with his new purchase."

YOUR GO!

If you' think you've reached a better end sequence, write to us and tell us what it is, how you got there and why you think it's so great. Prizes are on offer for the ones that we feature on this page include a framed print of the final artwork. Write to us at: **GameOver, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW**. Email **PS2@futurenet.co.uk**.

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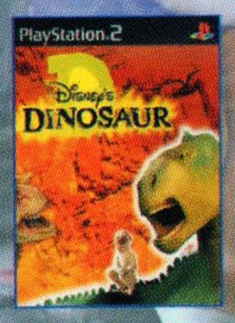
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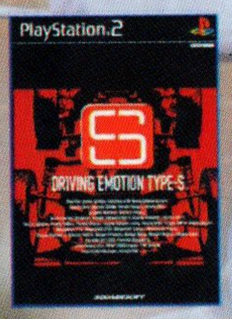
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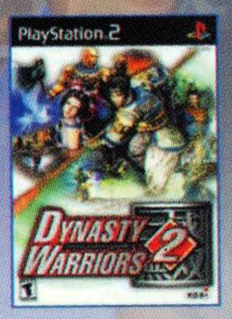
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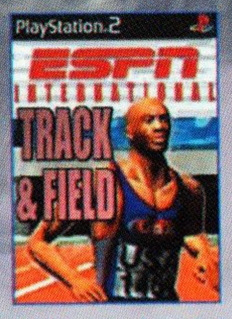
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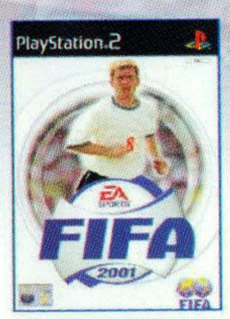

Dynasty Warriors 2
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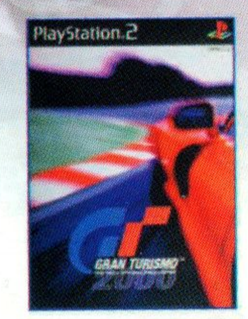

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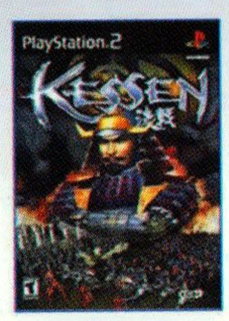

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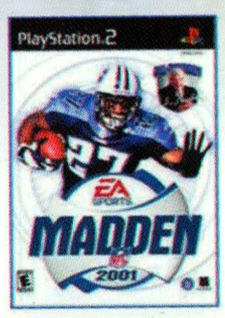

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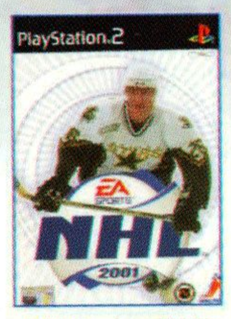

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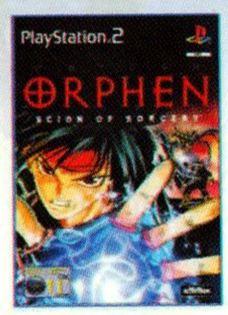

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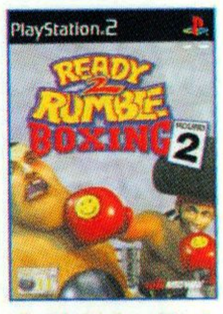

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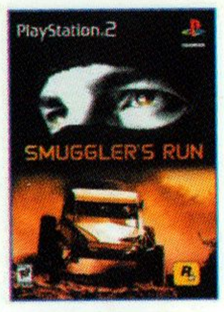

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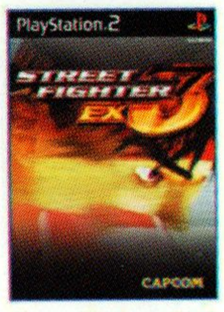

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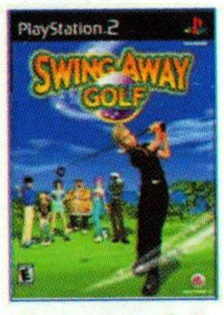

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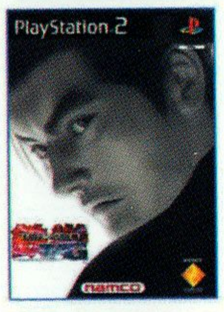

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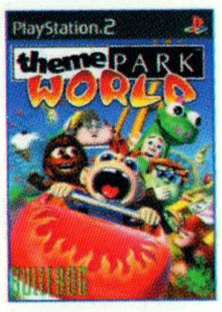

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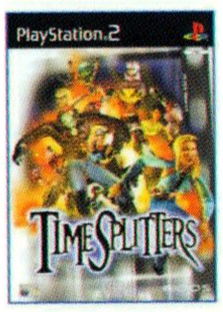

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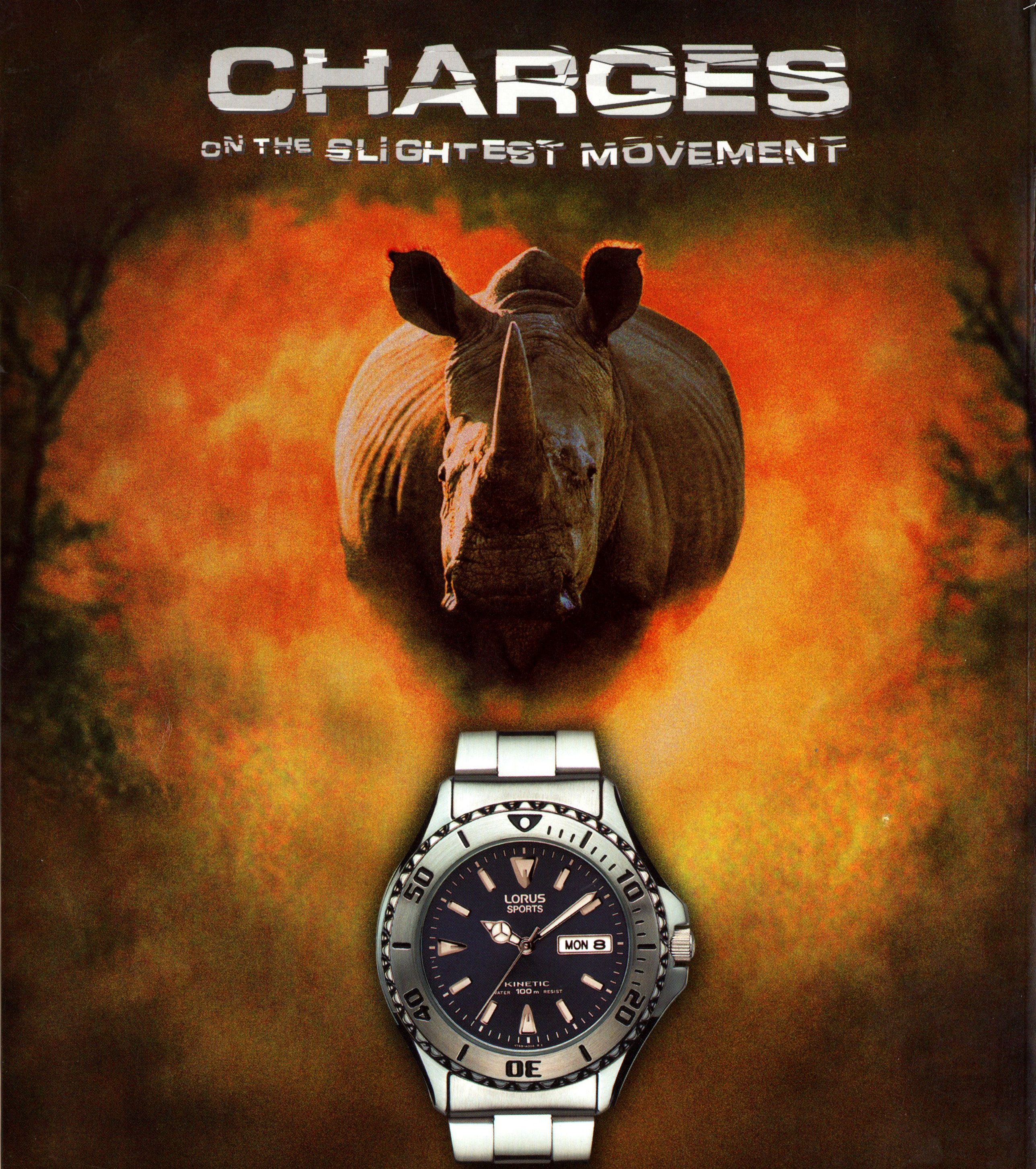
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